FROM SEA TO SEA

RUDYARD KIPLING

S. P. H. Bixby

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PREFACE

In these two volumes I have got together the bulk of the special correspondence and occasional articles written by me for the *Civil and Military Gazette* and the *Pioneer* between 1887–1889. I have been forced to this action by the enterprise of various publishers who, not content with disinterring old newspaper work from the decent seclusion of the office files, have in several instances seen fit to embellish it with additions and interpolations.

RUDYARD KIPLING.

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LETTERS OF MARQUE

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I

OF THE BEGINNING OF THINGS. OF THE TAJ AND THE GLOBE-TROTTER. THE YOUNG MAN FROM MANCHESTER AND CERTAIN MORAL REFLECTIONS.

Nov.–Dec., 1887

Except for those who, under compulsion of a sick certificate, are flying Bombaywards, it is good for every man to see some little of the great Indian Empire and the strange folk who move about it. It is good to escape for a time from the House of Rimmon — be it office or cutchery — and to go abroad under no more exacting master than personal inclination, and with no more definite plan of travel than has the horse, escaped from pasture, free upon the countryside. The first result of such freedom is extreme bewilderment, and the second reduces the freed to a state of mind which, for his sins, must be the normal portion of the Globe-trotter — the man who "does" kingdoms in days and writes books upon them in weeks. And this desperate facility is not as strange as it seems. By the time that an Englishman has come by sea and rail *via* America, Japan, Singapur, and Ceylon, to India, he can — these eyes have seen him do so — master in five minutes the intricacies of the

Indian Bradshaw, and tell an old resident exactly how and where the trains run. Can we wonder that the intoxication of success in hasty assimilation should make him overbold, and that he should try to grasp — but a full account of the insolent Globe-trotter must be reserved. He is worthy of a book. Given absolute freedom for a month, the mind, as I have said, fails to take in the situation and, after much debate, contents itself with following in old and well-beaten ways — paths that we in India have no time to tread, but must leave to the country cousin who wears his *pagri* tail-fashion down his back, and says "cabman" to the driver of the *ticca-ghari.*

Now, Jeypore from the Anglo-Indian point of view is a station on the Rajputana-Malwa line, on the way to Bombay, where half an hour is allowed for dinner, and where there ought to be more protection from the sun than at present exists. Some few, more learned than the rest, know that garnets come from Jeypore, and here the limits of our wisdom are set. We do not, to quote the Calcutta shopkeeper, come out "for the good of our 'ealth," and what touring we accomplish is for the most part off the line of rail.

For these reasons, and because he wished to study our winter birds of passage, one of the few thousand Englishmen in India on a date and in a place which have no concern with the story, sacrificed all his self-respect and became — at enormous personal inconvenience — a Globe-trotter going to Jeypore, and leaving behind him for a little while all that old and well-known life in which Commissioners and Deputy-Commissioners, Governors and Lieutenant-Governors, Aides-de-camp, Colonels and their wives, Majors, Captains, and Subalterns after their

kind move and rule and govern and squabble and fight and sell each other's horses and tell wicked stories of their neighbours. But before he had fully settled into his part or accustomed himself to saying, "Please take out this luggage," to the coolies at the stations, he saw from the train the Taj wrapped in the mists of the morning.

There is a story of a Frenchman who feared not God, nor regarded man, sailing to Egypt for the express purpose of scoffing at the Pyramids and — though this is hard to believe — at the great Napoleon who had warred under their shadow. It is on record that that blasphemous Gaul came to the Great Pyramid and wept through mingled reverence and contrition; for he sprang from an emotional race. To understand his feelings it is necessary to have read a great deal too much about the Taj, its design and proportions, to have seen execrable pictures of it at the Simla Fine Arts Exhibition, to have had its praises sung by superior and travelled friends till the brain loathed the repetition of the word, and then, sulky with want of sleep, heavy-eyed, unwashed, and chilled, to come upon it suddenly. Under these circumstances everything, you will concede, is in favour of a cold, critical, and not too impartial verdict. As the Englishman leaned out of the carriage he saw first an opal-tinted cloud on the horizon, and, later, certain towers. The mists lay on the ground, so that the splendour seemed to be floating free of the earth; and the mists rose in the background, so that at no time could everything be seen clearly. Then as the train sped forward, and the mists shifted, and the sun shone upon the mists, the Taj took a hundred new shapes, each perfect and each beyond

description. It was the Ivory Gate through which all good dreams come; it was the realisation of the gleaming halls of dawn that Tennyson sings of; it was veritably the "aspiration fixed," the "sign made stone" of a lesser poet; and over and above concrete comparisons, it seemed the embodiment of all things pure, all things holy, and all things unhappy. That was the mystery of the building. It may be that the mists wrought the witchery, and that the Taj seen in the dry sunlight is only, as guide-books say, a noble structure. The Englishman could not tell, and has made a vow that he will never go nearer the spot, for fear of breaking the charm of the unearthly pavilions.

It may be, too, that each must view the Taj for himself with his own eyes, working out his own interpretation of the sight. It is certain that no man can in cold blood and colder ink set down his impressions if he has been in the least moved.

To the one who watched and wondered that November morning the thing seemed full of sorrow — the sorrow of the man who built it for the woman he loved, and the sorrow of the workmen who died in the building — used up like cattle. And in the face of this sorrow the Taj flushed in the sunlight and was beautiful, after the beauty of a woman who has done no wrong.

Here the train ran in under the walls of Agra Fort, and another train — of thought incoherent as that written above — came to an end. Let those who scoff at overmuch enthusiasm look at the Taj and thenceforward be dumb. It is well on the threshold of a journey to be taught reverence and awe.

But there is no reverence in the Globe-trotter: he is

brazen. A Young Man from Manchester was travelling to Bombay in order — how the words hurt! — to be home by Christmas. He had come through America, New Zealand, and Australia, and finding that he had ten days to spare at Bombay, conceived the modest idea of "doing India." "I don't say that I've done it all; but you may say that I've seen a good deal." Then he explained that he had been "much pleased" at Agra, "much pleased" at Delhi, and, last profanation, "very much pleased" at the Taj. Indeed, he seemed to be going through life just then "much pleased" at everything. With rare and sparkling originality he remarked that India was a "big place," and that there were many things to buy. Verily, this Young Man must have been a delight to the Delhi boxwallahs. He had purchased shawls and embroidery "to the tune of" a certain number of rupees duly set forth, and he had purchased jewellery to another tune. These were gifts for friends at home, and he considered them "very Eastern." If silver filigree work modelled on Palais Royal patterns, or aniline blue scarves be Eastern, he had succeeded in his heart's desire. For some inscrutable end it had been decreed that man shall take a delight in making his fellow-man miserable. The Englishman began to point out gravely the probable extent to which the Young Man from Manchester had been swindled, and the Young Man said: "By Jove. You don't say so. I hate being done. If there's anything I hate, it's being done!"

He had been so happy in the "thought of getting home by Christmas," and so charmingly communicative as to the members of his family for whom such and such gifts were intended, that the Englishman cut short the

record of fraud and soothed him by saying that he had not been so very badly "done," after all. This consideration was misplaced, for, his peace of mind restored, the Young Man from Manchester looked out of the window and, waving his hand over the Empire generally, said: "I say. Look here. All those wells are wrong, you know!" The wells were on the wheel and inclined plane system; but he objected to the incline, and said that it would be much better for the bullocks if they walked on level ground. Then light dawned upon him, and he said: "I suppose it's to exercise all their muscles. Y' know a canal horse is no use after he has been on the tow-path for some time. He can't walk anywhere but on the flat, y' know, and I suppose it's just the same with bullocks." The spurs of the Aravalis, under which the train was running, had evidently suggested this brilliant idea which passed uncontradicted, for the Englishman was looking out of the window.

If one were bold enough to generalise after the manner of Globe-trotters, it would be easy to build up a theory on the well incident to account for the apparent insanity of some of our cold weather visitors. Even the Young Man from Manchester could evolve a complete idea for the training of well-bullocks in the East at thirty seconds' notice. How much the more could a cultivated observer from, let us say, an English constituency, blunder and pervert and mangle? We in this country have no time to work out the notion, which is worthy of the consideration of some leisurely Teuton intellect.

Envy may have prompted a too bitter judgment of the Young Man from Manchester; for, as the train bore him from Jeypore to Ahmedabad, happy in "his getting home

by Christmas," pleased as a child with his Delhi atrocities, pink-cheeked, whiskered, and superbly self-confident, the Englishman whose home for the time was a dark bungaloathsome hotel, watched his departure regretfully; for he knew exactly to what sort of genial, cheery British household, rich in untravelled kin, that Young Man was speeding. It is pleasant to play at Globe-trotting; but to enter fully into the spirit of the piece, one must also be "going home for Christmas."

II

SHOWS THE CHARM OF RAJPUTANA AND OF JEYPORE, THE CITY OF THE GLOBE-TROTTER. OF ITS FOUNDER AND ITS EMBELLISHMENT. EXPLAINS THE USE AND DESTINY OF THE STUD-BRED, AND FAILS TO EXPLAIN MANY MORE IMPORTANT MATTERS.

If any part of a land strewn with dead men's bones have a special claim to distinction, Rajputana, as the cock-pit of India, stands first. East of Suez men do not build towers on the tops of hills for the sake of the view, nor do they stripe the mountain sides with bastioned stone walls to keep in cattle. Since the beginning of time, if we are to credit the legends, there was fighting — heroic fighting — at the foot of the Aravalis and beyond, in the great deserts of sand penned by those kindly mountains from spreading over the heart of India. The "Thirty-six Royal Races" fought as royal races know how to do, Chohan with Rahtor, brother against brother, son against father. Later — but excerpts from the tangled tale of force, fraud, cunning, desperate love and more desperate revenge, crime worthy of demons and virtues fit for gods, may be found, by all who care to look, in the book of the man who loved the Rajputs and gave a life's labours in their behalf. From Delhi to Abu, and from the Indus to the Chambul, each yard of ground has witnessed slaughter, pillage, and

rapine. But, to-day, the capital of the State, that Dhola Rae, son of Soora Singh, hacked out more than nine hundred years ago with the sword from some weaker ruler's realm, is lighted with gas, and possesses many striking and English peculiarities.

Dhola Rae was killed in due time, and for nine hundred years Jeypore, torn by the intrigues of unruly princes and princelings, fought Asiatically.

When and how Jeypore became a feudatory of British power and in what manner we put a slur upon Rajput honour — punctilious as the honour of the Pathan — are matters of which the Globe-trotter knows more than we do. He "reads up" — to quote his own words — a city before he comes to us, and, straightway going to another city, forgets, or, worse still, mixes what he has learnt — so that in the end he writes down the Rajput a Mahratta, says that Lahore is in the Northwest Provinces, and was once the capital of Sivaji, and piteously demands a "guide-book on all India, a thing that you can carry in your trunk y' know — that gives you plain descriptions of things without mixing you up." Here is a chance for a writer of discrimination and void of conscience!

But to return to Jeypore — a pink city set on the border of a blue lake, and surrounded by the low, red spurs of the Aravalis — a city to see and to puzzle over. There was once a ruler of the State, called Jey Singh, who lived in the days of Aurungzeb, and did him service with foot and horse. He must have been the Solomon of Rajputana, for through the forty-four years of his reign his "wisdom remained with him." He led armies, and when fighting was over, turned to literature; he intrigued desperately and successfully, but found time

to gain a deep insight into astronomy, and, by what remains above ground now, we can tell that whatsoever his eyes desired, he kept not from him. Knowing his own worth, he deserted the city of Amber founded by Dhola Rae among the hills, and, six miles further, in the open plain, bade one Vedyadhar, his architect, build a new city, as seldom Indian city was built before — with huge streets straight as an arrow, sixty yards broad, and cross-streets broad and straight. Many years afterward the good people of America builded their towns after this pattern, but knowing nothing of Jey Singh, they took all the credit to themselves.

He built himself everything that pleased him, palaces and gardens and temples, and then died, and was buried under a white marble tomb on a hill overlooking the city. He was a traitor, if history speak truth, to his own kin, and he was an accomplished murderer, but he did his best to check infanticide; he reformed the Mahometan calendar; he piled up a superb library and he made Jeypore a marvel.

Later on came a successor, educated and enlightened by all the lamps of British Progress, and converted the city of Jey Singh into a surprise — a big, bewildering, practical joke. He laid down sumptuous *trottoirs* of hewn stone, and central carriage drives, also of hewn stone, in the main street; he, that is to say, Colonel Jacob, the Superintending Engineer of the State, devised a water supply for the city and studded the ways with standpipes. He built gas works, set afoot a School of Art, a Museum — all the things in fact which are necessary to Western municipal welfare and comfort, and saw that they were the best of their kind. How much Colo-

nel Jacob has done, not only for the good of Jeypore city but for the good of the State at large, will never be known, because the officer in question is one of the not small class who resolutely refuse to talk about their own work. The result of the good work is that the old and the new, the rampantly raw and the sullenly old, stand cheek-by-jowl in startling contrast. Thus, the branded bull trips over the rails of a steel tramway which brings out the city rubbish; the lacquered and painted cart behind the two little stag-like trotting bullocks catches its primitive wheels in the cast-iron gas-lamp post with the brass nozzle a-top, and all Rajputana, gayly clad, small-turbaned swaggering Rajputana, circulates along the magnificent pavements.

The fortress-crowned hills look down upon the strange medley. One of them bears on its flank in huge white letters the cheery inscript, "Welcome!" This was made when the Prince of Wales visited Jeypore to shoot his first tiger; but the average traveller of to-day may appropriate the message to himself, for Jeypore takes great care of strangers and shows them all courtesy. This, by the way, demoralises the Globe-trotter, whose first cry is, "Where can we get horses? Where can we get elephants? Who is the man to write to for all these things?"

Thanks to the courtesy of the Maharaja, it is possible to see everything, but for the incurious who object to being driven through their sights, a journey down any one of the great main streets is a day's delightful occupation. The view is as unobstructed as that of the Champs Élysées; but in place of the white-stone fronts of Paris, rises a long line of open-work screen-wall, the

prevailing tone of which is pink, caramel-pink, but house-owners have unlimited license to decorate their tenements as they please. Jeypore, broadly considered, is Hindu, and her architecture of the riotous, many-arched type which even the Globe-trotter after a short time learns to call Hindu. It is neither temperate nor noble, but it satisfies the general desire for something that "really looks Indian." A perverse taste for low company drew the Englishman from the pavement — to walk upon a real stone pavement is in itself a privilege — up a side-street, where he assisted at a quail fight and found the low-caste Rajput a cheery and affable soul. The owner of the losing quail was a trooper in the Maharaja's army. He explained that his pay was six rupees a month paid bi-monthly. He was cut the cost of his khaki blouse, brown-leather accoutrements, and jack-boots; lance, saddle, sword, and horse were given free. He refused to say for how many months in the year he was drilled, and said vaguely that his duties were mainly escort ones, and he had no fault to find with them. The defeat of his quail had vexed him, and he desired the Sahib to understand that the sowars of His Highness's army could ride. A clumsy attempt at a compliment so fired his martial blood that he climbed into his saddle, and then and there insisted on showing off his horsemanship. The road was narrow, the lance was long, and the horse was a big one, but no one objected, and the Englishman sat him down on a doorstep and watched the fun. The horse seemed in some shadowy way familiar. His head was not the lean head of the Kathiawar, nor his crest the crest of the Marwarri, and his forelegs did not belong to these stony

districts. "Where did he come from?" The sowar pointed northward and said, "from Amritsar," but he pronounced it "Armtzar." Many horses had been bought at the spring fairs in the Punjab; they cost about two hundred rupees each, perhaps more, the sowar could not say. Some came from Hissar and some from other places beyond Delhi. They were very good horses. "That horse there," he pointed to one a little distance down the street, "is the son of a big Government horse — the kind that the Sirkar make for breeding horses — so high!" The owner of "that horse" swaggered up, jaw bandaged and cat-moustached, and bade the Englishman look at his mount; bought, of course, when a colt. Both men together said that the Sahib had better examine the Maharaja Sahib's stable, where there were hundreds of horses, huge as elephants or tiny as sheep.

To the stables the Englishman accordingly went, knowing beforehand what he would find, and wondering whether the Sirkar's "big horses" were meant to get mounts for Rajput sowars. The Maharaja's stables are royal in size and appointments. The enclosure round which they stand must be about half a mile long — it allows ample space for exercising, besides paddocks for the colts. The horses, about two hundred and fifty, are bedded in pure white sand — bad for the coat if they roll, but good for the feet — the pickets are of white marble, the heel-ropes in every case of good sound rope, and in every case the stables are exquisitely clean. Each stall contains above the manger, a curious little bunk for the syce who, if he uses the accommodation, must assuredly die once each hot weather.

A journey round the stables is saddening, for the at-

tendants are very anxious to strip their charges, and the stripping shows so much. A few men in India are credited with the faculty of never forgetting a horse they have once seen, and of knowing the produce of every stallion they have met. The Englishman would have given something for their company at that hour. His knowledge of horseflesh was very limited; but he felt certain that more than one or two of the sleek, perfectly groomed country-breds should have been justifying their existence in the ranks of the British cavalry, instead of eating their heads off on six seers of gram and one of sugar per diem. But they had all been honestly bought and honestly paid for; and there was nothing in the wide world to prevent His Highness, if he wished to do so, from sweeping up the pick and pride of all the stud-bred horses in the Punjab. The attendants appeared to take a wicked delight in saying "eshtud-bred" very loudly and with unnecessary emphasis as they threw back the loin-cloth. Sometimes they were wrong, but in too many cases they were right.

The Englishman left the stables and the great central maidan, where a nervous Biluchi was being taught, by a perfect network of ropes, to "monkey-jump," and went out into the streets reflecting on the working of horse-breeding operations under the Government of India, and the advantages of having unlimited money wherewith to profit by other people's mistakes.

Then, as happened to the great Tartarin of Tarescon, wild beasts began to roar, and a crowd of little boys laughed. The lions of Jeypore are tigers, caged in a public place for the sport of the people, who hiss at them and disturb their royal feelings. Two or three of

the six great brutes are magnificent. All of them are short-tempered, and the bars of their captivity not too strong. A pariah-dog was furtively trying to scratch out a fragment of meat from between the bars of one of the cages, and the occupant tolerated him. Growing bolder, the starveling growled; the tiger struck at him with his paw, and the dog fled howling with fear. When he returned, he brought two friends with him, and the three mocked the captive from a distance.

It was not a pleasant sight and suggested Globe-trotters — gentlemen who imagine that "more curricles" should come at their bidding, and on being undeceived become abusive.

III

DOES NOT IN ANY SORT DESCRIBE THE DEAD CITY OF AMBER, BUT GIVES DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT A COTTON-PRESS.

And what shall be said of Amber, Queen of the Pass — the city that Jey Singh bade his people slough as snakes cast their skins? The Globe-trotter will assure you that it must be "done" before anything else, and the Globe-trotter is, for once, perfectly correct. Amber lies between six and seven miles from Jeypore among the tumbled fragments of the hills, and is reachable by so prosaic a conveyance as a *ticca-ghari*, and so uncomfortable a one as an elephant. *He* is provided by the Maharaja, and the people who make India their prey, are apt to accept his services as a matter of course.

Rise very early in the morning, before the stars have gone out, and drive through the sleeping city till the pavement gives place to cactus and sand, and educational and enlightened institutions to mile upon mile of semi-decayed Hindu temples — brown and weather-beaten — running down to the shores of the great Man Sagar Lake, wherein are more ruined temples, palaces, and fragments of causeways. The water-birds have their home in the half-submerged arcades and the crocodile nuzzles the shafts of the pillars. It is a fitting prelude

to the desolation of Amber. Beyond the Man Sagar the road of to-day climbs up-hill, and by its side runs the huge stone causeway of yesterday — blocks sunk in concrete. Down this path the swords of Amber went out to kill. A triple wall rings the city, and, at the third gate, the road drops into the valley of Amber. In the half light of dawn, a great city sunk between hills and built round three sides of a lake is dimly visible, and one waits to catch the hum that should arise from it as the day breaks. The air in the valley is bitterly chill. With the growing light, Amber stands revealed, and the traveller sees that it is a city that will never wake. A few *meenas* live in huts at the end of the valley, but the temples, the shrines, the palaces, and the tiers-on-tiers of houses are desolate. Trees grow in and split upon the walls, the windows are filled with brushwood, and the cactus chokes the street. The Englishman made his way up the side of the hill to the great palace that overlooks everything except the red fort of Jeighur, guardian of Amber. As the elephant swung up the steep roads paved with stone and built out on the sides of the hill, the Englishman looked into empty houses where the little grey squirrel sat and scratched its ears. The peacock walked on the house-tops, and the blue pigeon roosted within. He passed under iron-studded gates whose hinges were eaten out with rust, and by walls plumed and crowned with grass, and under more gateways, till, at last, he reached the palace and came suddenly into a great quadrangle where two blinded, arrogant stallions, covered with red and gold trappings, screamed and neighed at each other from opposite ends of the vast space. For a little time these were the only

visible living beings, and they were in perfect accord with the spirit of the spot. Afterwards certain workmen appeared, for it seems that the Maharaja keeps the old palace of his forefathers in good repair, but they were modern and mercenary, and with great difficulty were detached from the skirts of the traveller. A somewhat extensive experience of palace-seeing had taught him that it is best to see palaces alone, for the Oriental as a guide is undiscriminating and sets too great a store on corrugated iron roofs and glazed drain-pipes.

So the Englishman went into this palace built of stone, bedded on stone, springing out of scarped rock, and reached by stone ways — nothing but stone. Presently, he stumbled across a little temple of Kali, a gem of marble tracery and inlay, very dark and, at that hour of the morning, very cold.

If, as Viollet-le-Duc tells us to believe, a building reflects the character of its inhabitants, it must be impossible for one reared in an Eastern palace to think straightly or speak freely or — but here the annals of Rajputana contradict the theory — to act openly. The crampt and darkened rooms, the narrow smooth-walled passages with recesses where a man might wait for his enemy unseen, the maze of ascending and descending stairs leading nowhither, the ever-present screens of marble tracery that may hide or reveal so much, — all these things breathe of plot and counter-plot, league and intrigue. In a living palace where the sightseer knows and feels that there are human beings everywhere, and that he is followed by scores of unseen eyes, the impression is almost unendurable. In a dead palace — a cemetery of loves and hatreds done with hundreds of years

ago, and of plottings that had for their end, though the greybeards who plotted knew it not, the coming of the British tourist with guide-book and sun-hat — oppression gives place to simply impertinent curiosity. The Englishman wandered into all parts of the palace, for there was no one to stop him — not even the ghosts of the dead Queens — through ivory-studded doors, into the women's quarters, where a stream of water once flowed over a chiselled marble channel. A creeper had set its hands upon the lattice there, and there was the dust of old nests in one of the niches in the wall. Did the lady of light virtue who managed to become possessed of so great a portion of Jey Singh's library ever set her dainty feet in the trim garden of the Hall of Pleasure beyond the screen-work? Was it in the forty-pillared Hall of Audience that the order went forth that the Chief of Birjooghar was to be slain, and from what wall did the King look out when the horsemen clattered up the steep stone path to the palace, bearing on their saddle-bows the heads of the bravest of Rajore? There were questions innumerable to be asked in each court and keep and cell; but the only answer was the cooing of the pigeons.

If a man desired beauty, there was enough and to spare in the palace; and of strength more than enough. With inlay and carved marble, with glass and colour, the Kings who took their pleasure in that now desolate pile, made all that their eyes rested upon royal and superb. But any description of the artistic side of the palace, if it were not impossible, would be wearisome. The wise man will visit it when time and occasion serve, and will then, in some small measure, understand what must have

been the riotous, sumptuous, murderous life to which our Governors and Lieutenant-Governors, Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners, Colonels and Captains and the Subalterns, have put an end.

From the top of the palace you may read if you please the Book of Ezekiel written in stone upon the hillside. Coming up, the Englishman had seen the city from below or on a level. He now looked into its very heart — the heart that had ceased to beat. There was no sound of men or cattle, or grind-stones in those pitiful streets — nothing but the cooing of the pigeons. At first it seemed that the palace was not ruined at all — that soon the women would come up on the house-tops and the bells would ring in the temples. But as he attempted to follow with his eye the turns of the streets, the Englishman saw that they died out in wood tangle and blocks of fallen stone, and that some of the houses were rent with great cracks, and pierced from roof to road with holes that let in the morning sun. The drip-stones of the eaves were gap-toothed, and the tracery of the screens had fallen out so that zenana-rooms lay shamelessly open to the day. On the outskirts of the city, the strong-walled houses dwindled and sank down to mere stone-heaps and faint indications of plinth and wall, hard to trace against the background of stony soil. The shadow of the palace lay over two-thirds of the city and the trees deepened the shadow. "He who has bent him o'er the dead" *after* the hour of which Byron sings, knows that the features of the man become blunted as it were — the face begins to fade. The same hideous look lies on the face of the Queen of the Pass, and when once this is realised, the eye wonders that it could have ever believed

in the life of her. She is the city "whose graves are set in the side of the pit, and her company is round about her graves," sister of Pathros, Zoan, and No.

Moved by a thoroughly insular instinct, the Englishman took up a piece of plaster and heaved it from the palace wall into the dark streets. It bounded from a house-top to a window-ledge, and thence into a little square, and the sound of its fall was hollow and echoing, as the sound of a stone in a well. Then the silence closed up upon the sound, till in the far-away courtyard below the roped stallions began screaming afresh. There may be desolation in the great Indian Desert to the westward, and there is desolation on the open seas; but the desolation of Amber is beyond the loneliness either of land or sea. Men by the hundred thousand must have toiled at the walls that bound it, the temples and bastions that stud the walls, the fort that overlooks all, the canals that once lifted water to the palace, and the garden in the lake of the valley. Renan could describe it as it stands to-day, and Vereschaguin could paint it.

Arrived at this satisfactory conclusion, the Englishman went down through the palace and the scores of venomous and suggestive little rooms, to the elephant in the courtyard, and was taken back in due time to the Nineteenth Century in the shape of His Highness, the Maharaja's Cotton-Press, returning a profit of twenty-seven per cent, and fitted with two engines, of fifty horse-power each, an hydraulic press, capable of exerting a pressure of three tons per square inch, and everything else to correspond. It stood under a neat corrugated iron roof close to the Jeypore Railway Station, and was

in most perfect order, but somehow it did not taste well after Amber. There was aggressiveness about the engines and the smell of the raw cotton.

The modern side of Jeypore must not be mixed with the ancient.

IV

THE TEMPLE OF MAHADEO AND THE MANNERS OF SUCH AS SEE INDIA. THE MAN BY THE WATER-TROUGHS AND HIS KNOWLEDGE. THE VOICE OF THE CITY AND WHAT IT SAID. PERSONALITIES AND THE HOSPITAL. THE HOUSE BEAUTIFUL OF JEYPORE AND ITS BUILDERS.

From the Cotton-Press the Englishman wandered through the wide streets till he came into a Hindu temple — rich in marble stone and inlay, and a deep and tranquil silence, close to the Public Library of the State. The brazen bull was hung with flowers, and men were burning the evening incense before Mahadeo; while those who had prayed their prayer beat upon the bells hanging from the roof and passed out, secure in the knowledge that the god had heard them. If there be much religion, there is little reverence, as Westerns understand the term, at the services of the gods of the East. A tiny little maiden, child of a monstrously ugly, wall-eyed priest, staggered across the marble pavement to the shrine and threw, with a gust of childish laughter, the blossoms she was carrying into the lap of the great Mahadeo himself. Then she made as though she would leap up to the bell and ran away, still laughing, into the shadow of the cells behind the shrine, while her father explained that she was but a baby and that Mahadeo would take no notice. The temple, he said,

was specially favoured by the Maharaja, and drew from lands an income of twenty thousand rupees a year. Thakoors and great men also gave gifts out of their benevolence; and there was nothing in the wide world to prevent an Englishman from following their example.

By this time — for Amber and the Cotton-Press had filled the hours — night was falling, and the priests unhooked the swinging jets and began to light up the impassive face of Mahadeo with gas! They used Swedish matches.

Full night brought the hotel and its curiously composed human menagerie.

There is, if a work-a-day world will believe, a society entirely outside, and unconnected with, that of the Station — a planet within a planet, where nobody knows anything about the Collector's wife, the Colonel's dinner-party, or what was really the matter with the Engineer. It is a curious, an insatiably curious, thing, and its literature is Newman's *Bradshaw*. Wandering "old arm-sellers" and others live upon it, and so do the garnetmen and the makers of ancient Rajput shields. The world of the innocents abroad is a touching and unsophisticated place, and its very atmosphere urges the Anglo-Indian unconsciously to an extravagant mendacity. Can you wonder, then, that a guide of long-standing should in time grow to be an accomplished liar?

Into this world sometimes breaks the Anglo-Indian returned from leave, or a fugitive to the sea, and his presence is like that of a well-known land-mark in the desert. The old arms-seller knows and avoids him, and he is detested by the jobber of gharis who calls every

one "my lord" in English, and panders to the "glaring race anomaly" by saying that every carriage not under his control is "rotten, my lord, having been used by natives." One of the privileges of playing at tourist is the brevet-rank of "Lord." *Hazur* is not to be compared with it.

There are many, and some very curious, methods of seeing India. One of these is buying English translations of the more Zolaistic of Zola's novels and reading them from breakfast to dinner-time in the verandah. Yet another, even simpler, is American in its conception. Take a Newman's *Bradshaw* and a blue pencil, and race up and down the length of the Empire, ticking off the names of the stations "done." To do this thoroughly, keep strictly to the railway buildings and form your conclusions through the carriage-windows. These eyes have seen both ways of working in full blast; and, on the whole, the first is the most commendable.

Let us consider now with due reverence the modern side of Jeypore. It is difficult to write of a nickel-plated civilisation set down under the immemorial Aravalis in the first state of Rajputana. The red-grey hills seem to laugh at it, and the ever-shifting sand-dunes under the hills take no account of it, for they advance upon the bases of the monogrammed, coronet-crowned lamp-posts, and fill up the points of the natty tramways near the Waterworks, which are the outposts of the civilisation of Jeypore.

Escape from the city by the Railway Station till you meet the cactus and the mud-bank and the Maharaja's Cotton-Press. Pass between a tramway and a trough for wayfaring camels till your foot sinks ankle-deep in soft

sand, and you come upon what seems to be the fringe of illimitable desert — mound upon mound of tussocks overgrown with plumed grass where the parrots sit and swing. Here, if you have kept to the road, you shall find a dam faced with stone, a great tank, and pumping machinery fine as the heart of a municipal engineer can desire — pure water, sound pipes, and well-kept engines. If you belong to what is sarcastically styled an "able and intelligent municipality" under the British Rule, go down to the level of the tank, scoop up the water in your hands and drink, thinking meanwhile of the defects of the town whence you came. The experience will be a profitable one. There are statistics in connection with the Waterworks figures relating to "three-throw-plungers," delivery and supply, which should be known to the professional reader. They would not interest the unprofessional who would learn his lesson among the thronged standpipes of the city.

While the Englishman was preparing in his mind a scathing rebuke for an erring municipality that he knew of, a camel swung across the sands, its driver's jaw and brow bound mummy-fashion to guard against the dust. The man was evidently a stranger to the place, for he pulled up and asked the Englishman where the drinking-troughs were. He was a gentleman and bore very patiently with the Englishman's absurd ignorance of his dialect. He had come from some village, with an unpronounceable name, thirty *kos* away, to see his brother's son, who was sick in the big Hospital. While the camel was drinking the man talked, lying back along his mount. He knew nothing of Jeypore, except the names of certain Englishmen in it, the men who, he said, had made

the Waterworks and built the Hospital for his brother's son's comfort.

And this is the curious feature of Jeypore; though happily the city is not unique in its peculiarity. When the late Maharaja ascended the throne, more than fifty years ago, it was his royal will and pleasure that Jeypore should advance. Whether he was prompted by love for his subjects, desire for praise, or the magnificent vanity with which Jey Singh must have been so largely dowered, are questions that concern nobody. In the latter years of his reign, he was supplied with Englishmen who made the State their fatherland, and identified themselves with its progress as only Englishmen can. Behind them stood the Maharaja ready to spend money with a lavishness that no Supreme Government would dream of; and it would not be too much to say that the two made the State what it is. When Ram Singh died, Madho Singh, his successor, a conservative Hindu, forbore to interfere in any way with the work that was going forward. It is said in the city that he does not overburden himself with the cares of State, the driving power being mainly in the hands of a Bengali, who has everything but the name of Minister. Nor do the Englishmen, it is said in the city, mix themselves with the business of government; their business being wholly executive.

They can, according to the voice of the city, do what they please, and the voice of the city — not in the main roads, but in the little side-alleys where the stall-less bull blocks the path — attests how well their pleasure has suited the pleasure of the people. In truth, to men of action few things could be more delightful than having a State of fifteen thousand square miles placed at their

disposal, as it were, to leave their mark on. Unfortunately for the vagrant traveller, those who work hard for practical ends prefer not to talk about their doings, and he must, therefore, pick up what information he can at second-hand or in the city. The men at the standpipes explain that the Maharaja Sahib's father gave the order for the Waterworks and that Yakub (Jacob) Sahib made them — not only in the city, but out away in the district. "Did the people grow more crops thereby?" "Of course they did. Were canals made only to wash in?" "How much more crops?" "Who knows? The Sahib had better go and ask some official." Increased irrigation means increase of revenue for the State somewhere, but the man who brought about the increase does not say so.

After a few days of amateur Globe-trotting, a shamelessness great as that of the other loafer — the red-nosed man who hangs about compounds and is always on the eve of starting for Calcutta — possesses the masquerader; so that he feels equal to asking a Resident for a parcel-gilt howdah, or dropping into dinner with a Lieutenant-Governor. No man has a right to keep anything back from a Globe-trotter, who is a mild, temperate, gentlemanly, and unobtrusive seeker after truth. Therefore he who, without a word of enlightenment, sends the visitor into a city which he himself has beautified and adorned and made clean and wholesome, deserves unsparing exposure. And the city may be trusted to betray him. The *malli* in the Ram Newas Gardens — Gardens which are finer than any in India and fit to rank with the best in Paris — says that the Maharaja gave the order and Yakub Sahib made the Gardens. He also says that

the Hospital just outside the Gardens was built by Yakub Sahib, and if the Sahib will go to the centre of the Gardens, he will find another big building, a Museum by the same hand.

But the Englishman went first to the Hospital, and found the out-patients beginning to arrive. A Hospital cannot tell lies about its own progress as a municipality can. Sick folk either come or lie in their own villages. In the case of the Mayo Hospital, they came, and the operation book showed that they had been in the habit of coming. Doctors at issue with provincial and local administrations, Civil Surgeons who cannot get their indents complied with, ground-down and mutinous practitioners all India over, would do well to visit the Mayo Hospital, Jeypore. They might, in the exceeding bitterness of their envy, be able to point out some defects in its supplies, or its beds, or its splints, or in the absolute isolation of the women's quarters from the men's.

From the Hospital the Englishman went to the Museum in the centre of the Gardens, and was eaten up by it, for Museums appealed to him. The casing of the jewel was in the first place superb — a wonder of carven white stone of the Indo-Saracenic style. It stood on a stone plinth, and was rich in stone-tracery, green marble columns from Ajmir, red marble, white marble colonnades, courts with fountains, richly carved wooden doors, frescoes, inlay, and colour. The ornamentation of the tombs of Delhi, the palaces of Agra, and the walls of Amber have been laid under contribution to supply the designs in bracket, arch, and soffit; and stone-masons from the Jeypore School of Art have woven into the work the best that their hands could produce. The

building in essence if not in the fact of to-day, is the work of Freemasons. The men were allowed a certain scope in their choice of detail and the result . . . but it should be seen to be understood, as it stands in those Imperial Gardens. And, observe, the man who had designed it, who had superintended its erection, had said no word to indicate that there were such a thing in the place, or that every foot of it, from the domes of the roof to the cool green chunam dadoes and the carving of the rims of the fountains in the courtyard, was worth studying! Round the arches of the great centre court are written in Sanskrit and Hindi, texts from the great Hindu writers of old, bearing on the beauty of wisdom and the sanctity of true knowledge.

In the central corridor are six great frescoes, each about nine feet by five, copies of illustrations in the Royal Folio of the *Razmnameh*, the *Mahabharata*, which Abkar caused to be done by the best artists of his day. The original is in the Museum, and he who can steal it will find a purchaser at any price up to fifty thousand pounds.

V

OF THE SORDIDNESS OF THE SUPREME GOVERNMENT ON THE REVENUE SIDE; AND OF THE PALACE OF JEYPORE. A GREAT KING'S PLEASURE-HOUSE, AND THE WORK OF THE SERVANTS OF STATE.

INTERNALLY, there is, in all honesty, no limit to the luxury of the Jeypore Museum. It revels in "South Kensington" cases — of the approved pattern — that turn the beholder homesick, and South Kensington labels, whereon the description, measurements, and price of each object are fairly printed. These make savage one who knows how labelling is bungled in some of the Government Museums — our starved barns that are supposed to hold the economic exhibits, not of little States, but of great Provinces.

The floors are of dark red chunam, overlaid with a discreet and silent matting; the doors, where they are not plate glass, are of carved wood, no two alike, hinged by sumptuous brass hinges on to marble jambs and opening without noise. On the carved marble pillars of each hall are fixed revolving cases of the S. K. M. pattern to show textile fabrics, gold lace, and the like. In the recesses of the walls are more cases, and on the railing of the gallery that runs round each of the three great central rooms, are fixed low cases to hold natural history specimens and models of fruits and vegetables.

Hear this, Governments of India from the Punjab to Madras! The doors come true to the jamb, the cases, which have been through a hot weather, are neither warped nor cracked, nor are there unseemly tallow-drops and flaws in the glasses. The maroon cloth, on or against which the exhibits are placed, is of close texture, untouched by the moth, neither stained nor meagre nor sunfaded; the revolving cases revolve freely without rattling; there is not a speck of dust from one end of the building to the other, because the menial staff are numerous enough to keep everything clean, and the Curator's office is a veritable office — not a shed or a bath-room, or a loose-box partitioned from the main building. These things are so because money has been spent on the Museum, and it is now a rebuke to all other Museums in India from Calcutta downwards. Whether it is not too good to be buried away in a native State is a question which envious men may raise and answer as they choose. Not long ago, the editor of a Bombay paper passed through it, but having the interests of the Egocentric Presidency before his eyes, dwelt more upon the idea of the building than its structural beauties; saying that Bombay, who professed a weakness for technical education, should be ashamed of herself. And he was quite right.

The system of the Museum is complete in intention, as are its appointments in design. At present there are some fifteen thousand objects of art, covering a complete exposition of the arts, from enamels to pottery and from brass-ware to stone-carving, of the State of Jeypore. They are compared with similar arts of other lands. Thus a Damio's sword — a gem of lacquer-plated silk

and stud-work — flanks the *tulwars* of Marwar and the *jezails* of Tonk; and reproductions of Persian and Russian brass-work stand side by side with the handicrafts of the pupils of the Jeypore School of Art. A photograph of His Highness the present Maharaja is set among the arms, which are the most prominent features of the first or metal-room. As the villagers enter, they salaam reverently to the photo, and then move on slowly, with an evidently intelligent interest in what they see. Ruskin could describe the scene admirably — pointing out how reverence must precede the study of art, and how it is good for Englishmen and Rajputs alike to bow on occasion before Geisler's cap. They thumb the revolving cases of cloths do those rustics, and artlessly try to feel the texture through the protecting glass. The main object of the Museum is avowedly provincial — to show the craftsman of Jeypore the best that his predecessors could do, and what foreign artists have done. In time — but the Curator of the Museum has many schemes which will assuredly bear fruit in time, and it would be unfair to divulge them. Let those who doubt the thoroughness of a Museum under one man's control, built, filled, and endowed with royal generosity — an institution perfectly independent of the Government of India — go and exhaustively visit Dr. Hendley's charge at Jeypore. Like the man who made the building, he refuses to talk, and so the greater part of the work that he has in hand must be guessed at.

At one point, indeed, the Curator was taken off his guard. A huge map of the kingdom showed in green the portions that had been brought under irrigation, while blue circles marked the towns that owned dis-

pensaries. "I want to bring every man in the State within twenty miles of a dispensary — and I've nearly done it," said he. Then he checked himself, and went off to food-grains in little bottles as being neutral and colourless things. Envy is forced to admit that the arrangement of the Museum — far too important a matter to be explained off-hand — is Continental in its character, and has a definite end and bearing — a trifle omitted by many institutions other than Museums. But — in fine, what can one say of a collection whose very labels are gilt-edged! Shameful extravagance? Nothing of the kind — only finish, perfectly in keeping with the rest of the fittings — a finish that we in *kutcha* India have failed to catch.

From the Museum go out through the city to the Maharaja's Palace — skilfully avoiding the man who would show you the Maharaja's European billiard-room, — and wander through a wilderness of sunlit, sleepy courts, gay with paint and frescoes, till you reach an inner square, where smiling grey-bearded men squat at ease and play *chaupur* — just such a game as cost the Pandavs the fair Draupadi — with inlaid dice and gayly lacquered pieces. These ancients are very polite and will press you to play, but give no heed to them, for *chaupur* is an expensive game — expensive as quail-fighting, when you have backed the wrong bird and the people are laughing at your inexperience. The Maharaja's Palace is gay, overwhelmingly rich in candelabra, painted ceilings, gilt mirrors, and other evidences of a too hastily assimilated civilisation; but, if the evidence of the ear can be trusted, the old, old game of intrigue goes on as merrily as of yore. A figure in saffron came out of a

dark arch into the sunlight, almost falling into the arms of one in pink. "Where have you come from?" "I have been to see ——" the name was unintelligible. "That is a lie; you have *not!*" Then, across the court, some one laughed a low, croaking laugh. The pink and saffron figures separated as though they had been shot, and disappeared into separate bolt-holes. It was a curious little incident, and might have meant a great deal or just nothing at all. It distracted the attention of the ancients bowed above the *chaupur* cloth.

In the Palace-gardens there is even a greater stillness than that about the courts, and here nothing of the West, unless a critical soul might take exception to the lamp-posts. At the extreme end lies a lake-like tank swarming with *muggers*. It is reached through an opening under a block of zenana buildings. Remembering that all beasts by the palaces of Kings or the temples of priests in this country would answer to the name of "Brother," the Englishman cried with the voice of faith across the water. And the mysterious freemasonry did not fail. At the far end of the tank rose a ripple that grew and grew and grew like a thing in a nightmare, and became presently an aged *mugger*. As he neared the shore, there emerged, the green slime thick upon his eyelids, another beast, and the two together snapped at a cigar-butt — the only reward for their courtesy. Then, disgusted, they sank stern first with a gentle sigh. Now a *mugger's* sigh is the most suggestive sound in animal speech. It suggested first the zenana buildings overhead, the walled passes through the purple hills beyond, a horse that might clatter through the passes till he reached the Man Sagar Lake below the passes, and a

boat that might row across the Man Sagar till it nosed the wall of the Palace-tank, and then — then uprose the *mugger* with the filth upon his forehead and winked one horny eyelid — in truth he did! — and so supplied a fitting end to a foolish fiction of old days and things that might have been. But it must be unpleasant to live in a house whose base is washed by such a tank.

And so back through the chunamed courts, and among the gentle sloping paths between the orange trees, up to an entrance of the palace, guarded by two rusty brown dogs from Kabul, each big as a man, and each requiring a man's charpoy to sleep upon. Very gay was the front of the palace, very brilliant were the glimpses of the damask-couched, gilded rooms within, and very, very civilised were the lamp-posts with Ram Singh's monogram, devised to look like V. R., at the bottom, and a coronet at the top. An unseen brass band among the orange bushes struck up the overture of the *Bronze Horse*. Those who know the music will see at once that that was the only tune which exactly and perfectly fitted the scene and its surroundings. It was a coincidence and a revelation.

In his time and when he was not fighting, Jey Singh, the second, who built the city, was a great astronomer — a royal Omar Khayyam, for he, like the tent-maker of Nishapur, reformed a calendar, and strove to wring their mysteries from the stars with instruments worthy of a king. But in the end he wrote that the goodness of the Almighty was above everything, and died; leaving his observatory to decay without the palace-grounds.

From the *Bronze Horse* to the grass-grown enclosure that holds the Yantr Samrat, or Prince of Dials, is rather

an abrupt passage. Jey Singh built him a dial with a gnomon some ninety feet high, to throw a shadow against the sun, and the gnomon stands to-day, though there is grass in the kiosque at the top and the flight of steps up the hypotenuse is worn. He built also a zodiacal dial — twelve dials upon one platform — to find the moment of true noon at any time of the year, and hollowed out of the earth place for two hemispherical cups, cut by belts of stone, for comparative observations.

He made cups for calculating eclipses, and a mural quadrant and many other strange things of stone and mortar, of which people hardly know the names and but very little of the uses. Once, said a man in charge of two tiny elephants, *Indur* and *Har*, a Sahib came with the Viceroy, and spent eight days in the enclosure of the great neglected observatory, seeing and writing things in a book. But *he* understood *Sanskrit* — the Sanskrit upon the faces of the dials, and the meaning of the gnoma and pointers. Nowadays no one understands Sanskrit — not even the Pundits; but without doubt Jey Singh was a great man.

The hearer echoed the statement, though he knew nothing of astronomy, and of all the wonders in the observatory was only struck by the fact that the shadow of the Prince of Dials moved over its vast plate so quickly that it seemed as though Time, wroth at the insolence of Jey Singh, had loosed the Horses of the Sun and were sweeping everything — dainty Palace-gardens and ruinous instruments — into the darkness of eternal night. So he went away chased by the shadow on the dial, and returned to the hotel, where he found men who said — this must be a catch-word of Globe-trotters — that they were

"much pleased at" Amber. They further thought that "house-rent would be cheap in those parts," and sniggered over the witticism. There is a class of tourists, and a strangely large one, who individually never get farther than the "much pleased" state under any circumstances. This same class of tourists, it has also been observed, are usually free with hackneyed puns, vapid phrases, and alleged or bygone jokes. Jey Singh, in spite of a few discreditable *laches*, was a temperate and tolerant man; but he would have hanged those Globe-trotters in their trunk-straps as high as the Yantr Samrat.

Next morning, in the grey dawn, the Englishman rose up and shook the sand of Jeypore from his feet, and went with Master Coryatt and Sir Thomas Roe to "Adsmir," wondering whether a year in Jeypore would be sufficient to exhaust its interest, and why he had not gone out to the tombs of the dead Kings and the passes of Gulta and the fort of Motee Dungri. But what he wondered at most — knowing how many men who have in any way been connected with the birth of an institution, do, to the end of their days, continue to drag forward and exhume their labours and the honours that did *not* come to them — was the work of the two men who, together for years past, have been pushing Jeypore along the stone-dressed paths of civilisation, peace, and comfort. "Servants of the Raj" they called themselves, and surely they have served the Raj past all praise. The people in the city and the camel-driver from the sand-hills told of their work. They themselves held their peace as to what they had done, and, when pressed, referred — crowning baseness — to reports. Printed ones!

VI

SHOWING HOW HER MAJESTY'S MAILS WENT TO UDAIPUR AND FELL OUT BY THE WAY.

Arrived at Ajmir, the Englishman fell among tents pitched under the shadow of a huge banian tree, and in them was a Punjabi. Now there is no brotherhood like the brotherhood of the Pauper Province; for it is even greater than the genial and unquestioning hospitality which, in spite of the loafer and the Globe-trotter, seems to exist throughout India. Ajmir being British territory, though the inhabitants are allowed to carry arms, is the headquarters of many of the banking firms who lend to the Native States. The complaint of the Setts to-day is that their trade is bad, because an unsympathetic Government induces Native States to make railways and become prosperous. "Look at Jodhpur!" said a gentleman whose possessions might be roughly estimated at anything between thirty and forty-five lakhs. "Time was when Jodhpur was always in debt — and not so long ago, either. Now, they've got a railroad and are carrying salt over it, and, as sure as I stand here, they have a *surplus!* What can we do?" Poor pauper! However, he makes a little profit on the fluctuations in the coinage of the States round him, for every small king seems to have the privilege of striking his own image and inflicting the Great Exchange Question on his subjects. It is

a poor State that has not two seers and five different rupees.

From a criminal point of view, Ajmir is not a pleasant place. The Native States lie all round and about it, and portions of the district are ten miles off, Native State-locked on every side. Thus the criminal, who may be a burglarious Meena lusting for the money bags of the Setts, or a Peshawari down south on a cold weather tour, has his plan of campaign much simplified.

The Englishman made only a short stay in the town, hearing that there was to be a ceremony — *tamasha* covers a multitude of things — at the capital of His Highness the Maharana of Udaipur — a town some hundred and eighty miles south of Ajmir, not known to many people beyond Viceroys and their Staffs and the officials of the Rajputana Agency. So he took a Neemuch train in the very early morning and, with the Punjabi, went due south to Chitor, the point of departure for Udaipur. In time the Aravalis gave place to a dead, flat, stone-strewn plain, thick with dhak-jungle. Later the date-palm fraternised with the dhak, and low hills stood on either side of the line. To this succeeded a tract rich in pure white stone — the line was ballasted with it. Then came more low hills, each with a comb of splintered rock a-top, overlooking dhak-jungle and villages fenced with thorns — places that at once declared themselves tigerish. Last, the huge bulk of Chitor showed itself on the horizon. The train crossed the Gumber River and halted almost in the shadow of the hills on which the old pride of Udaipur was set.

It is difficult to give an idea of the Chitor fortress; but the long line of brown wall springing out of bush-

covered hill suggested at once those pictures, such as the *Graphic* publishes, of the *Inflexible* or the *Devastation* — gigantic men-of-war with a very low free-board ploughing through green sea. The hill on which the fort stands is ship-shaped and some miles long, and, from a distance, every inch appears to be scarped and guarded. But there was no time to see Chitor. The business of the day was to get, if possible, to Udaipur from Chitor Station, which was composed of one platform, one telegraph-room, a bench, and several vicious dogs.

The State of Udaipur is as backward as Jeypore is advanced — if we judge it by the standard of civilisation. It does not approve of the incursions of Englishmen, and, to do it justice, it thoroughly succeeds in conveying its silent sulkiness. Still, where there is one English Resident, one Doctor, one Engineer, one Settlement Officer, and one Missionary, there must be a mail at least once a day. There was a mail. The Englishman, men said, might go by it if he liked, or he might not. Then, with a great sinking of the heart, he began to realise that his caste was of no value in the stony pastures of Mewar, among the swaggering gentlemen, who were so lavishly adorned with arms. There was a mail, the ghost of a tonga, with tattered side-cloths and patched roof, inconceivably filthy within and without, and it was Her Majesty's. There was another tonga, — an *aram* tonga, a carriage of ease — but the Englishman was not to have it. It was reserved for a Rajput Thakur who was going to Udaipur with his "tail." The Thakur, in claret-coloured velvet with a blue turban, a revolver — Army pattern — a sword, and five or six friends, also with swords, came by and indorsed the statement. Now, the

mail tonga had a wheel which was destined to become the Wheel of Fate, and to lead to many curious things. Two diseased yellow ponies were extracted from a dung-hill and yoked to the tonga; and after due deliberation Her Majesty's mail started, the Thakur following.

In twelve hours, or thereabouts, the seventy miles between Chitor and Udaipur would be accomplished. Behind the tonga cantered an armed sowar. He was the guard. The Thakur's tonga came up with a rush, ran deliberately across the bows of the Englishman, chipped a pony, and passed on. One lives and learns. The Thakur seems to object to following the foreigner.

At the halting-stages, once in every six miles, that is to say, the ponies were carefully undressed and all their accoutrements fitted more or less accurately on to the backs of any ponies that might happen to be near; the released animals finding their way back to their stables alone and unguided. There were no grooms, and the harness hung on by special dispensation of Providence. Still the ride over a good road, driven through a pitilessly stony country, had its charms for a while. At sunset the low hills turned to opal and wine-red and the brown dust flew up pure gold; for the tonga was running straight into the sinking sun. Now and again would pass a traveller on a camel, or a gang of *Bunjarras* with their pack-bullocks and their women; and the sun touched the brasses of their swords and guns till the poor wretches seemed rich merchants come back from travelling with Sindbad.

On a rock on the right-hand side, thirty-four great vultures were gathered over the carcass of a steer. And this was an evil omen. They made unseemly noises as

the tonga passed, and a raven came out of a bush on the right and answered them. To crown all, one of the hide and skin castes sat on the left-hand side of the road, cutting up some of the flesh that he had stolen from the vultures. Could a man desire three more inauspicious signs for a night's travel? Twilight came, and the hills were alive with strange noises, as the red moon, nearly at her full, rose over Chitor. To the low hills of the mad geological formation, the tumbled strata that seem to obey no law, succeeded level ground, the pasture lands of Mewar, cut by the Beruch and Wyan, streams running over smooth water-worn rock, and, as the heavy embankments and ample waterways showed, very lively in the rainy season.

In this region occurred the last and most inauspicious omen of all. Something had gone wrong with a crupper, a piece of blue and white punkah-cord. The Englishman pointed it out, and the driver, descending, danced on that lonely road an unholy dance, singing the while: "The *dumchi!* The *dumchi!* The *dumchi!*" in a shrill voice. Then he returned and drove on, while the Englishman wondered into what land of lunatics he was heading. At an average speed of six miles an hour, it is possible to see a great deal of the country; and, under brilliant moonlight, Mewar was desolately beautiful. There was no night traffic on the road, no one except the patient sowar, his shadow an inky blot on white, cantering twenty yards behind. Once the tonga strayed into a company of date trees that fringed the path, and once rattled through a little town, and once the ponies shied at what the driver said was a rock; but it jumped up in the moonlight and went away.

Then came a great blasted heath whereon nothing was more than six inches high — a wilderness covered with grass and low thorn; and here, as nearly as might be midway between Chitor and Udaipur, the Wheel of Fate, which had been for some time beating against the side of the tonga, came off, and Her Majesty's mails, two bags including parcels, collapsed on the wayside: while the Englishman repented him that he had neglected the omens of the vultures and the raven, the low-caste man and the mad driver.

There was a consultation and an examination of the wheel, but the whole tonga was rotten, and the axle was smashed and the axle pins were bent and nearly red-hot. "It is nothing," said the driver, "the mail often does this. What is a wheel?" He took a big stone and began hammering proudly on the tire, to show that that at least was sound. A hasty court-martial revealed that there was absolutely not one single relief vehicle on the whole road between Chitor and Udaipur.

Now this wilderness was so utterly waste that not even the barking of a dog or the sound of a night-fowl could be heard. Luckily the Thakur had, some twenty miles back, stepped out to smoke by the roadside, and his tonga had been passed meanwhile. The sowar was sent back to find that tonga and bring it on. He cantered into the haze of the moonlight and disappeared. Then said the driver: "Had there been no tonga behind us, I should have put the mails on a horse, because the Sirkar's mail cannot stop." The Englishman sat down upon the parcels-bag, for he felt that there was trouble coming. The driver looked East and West and said: "I, too, will go and see if the tonga can be found, for the

Sirkar's dak cannot stop. Meantime, oh, Sahib, do you take care of the mails — one bag and one bag of parcels." So he ran swiftly into the haze of the moonlight and was lost, and the Englishman was left alone in charge of Her Majesty's mails, two unhappy ponies, and a lop-sided tonga. He lit a fire, for the night was bitterly cold, and only mourned that he could not destroy the whole of the territories of His Highness, the Maharana of Udaipur. But he managed to raise a very fine blaze, before he reflected that all this trouble was his own fault for wandering into Native States undesirous of Englishmen.

The ponies coughed dolorously from time to time, but they could not lift the weight of a dead silence that seemed to be crushing the earth. After an interval measurable by centuries, sowar, driver, and Thakur's tonga reappeared; the latter full to the brim and bubbling over with humanity and bedding. "We will now," said the driver, not deigning to notice the Englishman who had been on guard over the mails, "put the Sirkar's mail into this tonga and go forward." Amiable heathen! He was going — he said so — to leave the Englishman to wait in the Sahara, for certainly thirty hours and perhaps forty-eight. Tongas are scarce on the Udaipur road. There are a few occasions in life when it is justifiable to delay Her Majesty's mails. This was one of them. Seating himself upon the parcels-bag, the Englishman cried in what was intended to be a very terrible voice, but the silence soaked it up and left only a thin trickle of sound, that any one who touched the bags would be hit with a stick, several times, over the head. The bags were the only link between him and the civili-

sation he had so rashly foregone. And there was a pause.

The Thakur put his head out of the tonga and spoke shrilly in Mewari. The Englishman replied in English-Urdu. The Thakur withdrew his head, and from certain grunts that followed seemed to be wakening his retainers. Then two men fell sleepily out of the tonga and walked into the night. "Come in," said the Thakur, "you and your baggage. My pistol is in that corner; be careful." The Englishman, taking a mail-bag in one hand for safety's sake, — the wilderness inspires an Anglo-Indian Cockney, with unreasoning fear, — climbed into the tonga, which was then loaded far beyond Plimsoll mark, and the procession resumed its journey. Every one in the vehicle — it seemed as full as the railway carriage that held Alice through the Looking-Glass — was *Sahib* and *Hazur*. Except the Englishman. He was simple *tum* (thou), and a revolver, Army pattern, was printing every diamond in the chequer-work of its handle, on his right hip. When men desired him to move, they prodded him with the handles of *tulwars* till they had coiled him into an uneasy lump. Then they slept upon him, or cannoned against him as the tonga bumped. It was an *aram* tonga, a tonga for ease. That was the bitterest thought of all.

In due season the harness began to break once every five minutes, and the driver vowed that the wheels would give way also.

After eight hours in one position, it is excessively difficult to walk, still more difficult to climb up an unknown road into a dak-bungalow; but he who has sought sleep on an arsenal and under the bodies of burly

Rajputs can do it. The grey dawn brought Udaipur and a French bedstead. As the tonga jingled away, the Englishman heard the familiar crack of broken harness. So he was not the Jonah he had been taught to consider himself all through that night of penance!

A jackal sat in the verandah and howled him to sleep, and he dreamed that he caught a Viceroy under the walls of Chitor and beat him with a tulwar till he turned into a dak-pony whose near foreleg was perpetually coming off and who would say nothing but *tum* when he was asked why he had not built a railway from Chitor to Udaipur.

VII

TOUCHING THE CHILDREN OF THE SUN AND THEIR CITY, AND THE HAT-MARKED CASTE AND THEIR MERITS, AND A GOOD MAN'S WORKS IN THE WILDERNESS.

It was worth a night's discomfort and revolver-beds to sleep upon — this city of the Suryavansi, hidden among the hills that encompass the great Pichola lake. Truly, the King who governs to-day is wise in his determination to have no railroad to his capital. His predecessor was more or less enlightened, and had he lived a few years longer, would have brought the iron horse through the Dobarri — the green gate which is the entrance of the Girwa or girdle of hills around Udaipur; and, with the train, would have come the tourist who would have scratched his name upon the Temple of Garuda and laughed horse-laughs upon the lake. Let us, therefore, be thankful that the capital of Mewar is hard to reach.

Each man in this land who has any claims to respectability walks armed, carrying his tulwar sheathed in his hand, or hung by a short sling of cotton passing over the shoulder, under his left armpit. His matchlock, or smooth-bore, if he has one, is borne naked on the shoulder.

Now it is possible to carry any number of lethal weapons without being actually dangerous. An unhandy revolver,

for instance, may be worn for years, and, at the end, accomplish nothing more noteworthy than the murder of its owner. But the Rajput's weapons are not meant for display. The Englishman caught a camel-driver who talked to him in Mewari, which is a heathenish dialect, something like Multani to listen to; and the man, very gracefully and courteously, handed him his sword and matchlock, the latter a heavy stump-stock arrangement without pretence of sights. The blade was as sharp as a razor, and the gun in perfect working order. The coiled fuse on the stock was charred at the end, and the curled ram's-horn powder-horn opened as readily as a much-handled whisky-flask. Unfortunately, ignorance of Mewari prevented conversation; so the camel-driver resumed his accoutrements and jogged forward on his beast — a superb black one, with the short curled *hubshee* hair — while the Englishman went to the city, which is built on hills on the borders of the lake. By the way, everything in Udaipur is built on a hill. There is no level ground in the place, except the Durbar Gardens, of which more hereafter. Because colour holds the eye more than form, the first thing noticeable was neither temple nor fort, but an ever-recurring picture, painted in the rudest form of native art, of a man on horseback armed with a lance, charging an elephant-of-war. As a rule, the elephant was depicted on one side the house-door and the rider on the other. There was no representation of an army behind. The figures stood alone upon the whitewash on house and wall and gate, again and again and again. A highly intelligent priest grunted that it was a picture; a private of the Maharana's regular army suggested that it was an elephant; while a

wheat-seller, his sword at his side, was equally certain that it was a Raja. Beyond that point, his knowledge did not go. The explanation of the picture is this. In the days when Raja Maun of Amber put his sword at Akbar's service and won for him great kingdoms, Akbar sent an army against Mewar, whose then ruler was Pertap Singh, most famous of all the princes of Mewar. Selim, Akbar's son, led the army of the Toork; the Rajputs met them at the pass of Huldighat and fought till one-half of their band was slain. Once, in the press of battle, Pertap on his great horse, Chytak, came within striking distance of Selim's elephant, and slew the mahout, but Selim escaped, to become Jehangir afterwards, and the Rajputs were broken. That was three hundred years ago, and men have reduced the picture to a sort of diagram that the painter dashes in, in a few minutes, without, it would seem, knowing what he is commemorating.

Thinking of these things, the Englishman made shift to get to the city, and presently came to a tall gate, the gate of the Sun, on which the elephant-spikes, that he had seen rotted with rust at Amber, were new and pointed and effective. The City gates are said to be shut at night, and there is a story of a Viceroy's Guard-of-Honour which arrived before daybreak, being compelled to crawl ignominiously man by man through a little wicket-gate, while the horses had to wait without till sunrise. But a civilised yearning for the utmost advantages of octroi, and not a fierce fear of robbery and wrong, is at the bottom of the continuance of this custom. The walls of the City are loopholed for musketry, but there seem to be no mounting for guns, and the moat

without the walls is dry and gives cattle pasture. Coarse rubble in concrete faced with stone makes the walls moderately strong.

Internally, the City is surprisingly clean, though with the exception of the main street, paved after the fashion of Jullundur, of which, men say, the pavement was put down in the time of Alexander and worn by myriads of naked feet into deep barrels and grooves. In the case of Udaipur, the feet of the passengers have worn the rock veins that crop out everywhere, smooth and shiny; and in the rains the narrow gullies must spout like fire-hoses. The people have been untouched by cholera for four years, proof that Providence looks after those who do not look after themselves, for Neemuch Cantonment, a hundred miles away, suffered grievously last summer. "And what do you make in Udaipur?" "Swords," said the man in the shop, throwing down an armful of *tulwars*, *kuttars*, and *khandas* on the stones. "Do you want any? Look here!" Hereat, he took up one of the commoner swords and flourished it in the sunshine. Then he bent it double, and, as it sprang straight, began to make it "speak." Arm-venders in Udaipur are a sincere race, for they sell to people who really use their wares. The man in the shop was rude — distinctly so. His first flush of professional enthusiasm abated, he took stock of the Englishman and said calmly: "What do *you* want with a sword?" Then he picked up his goods and retreated, while certain small boys, who deserved a smacking, laughed riotously from the coping of a little temple hard by. Swords seem to be the sole manufacture of the place. At least, none of the inhabitants the Englishman spoke to could think of any other.

There is a certain amount of personal violence in and about the State, or else where would be the good of the weapons? There are occasionally dacoities more or less important; but these are not often heard of, and, indeed, there is no special reason why they should be dragged into the light of an unholy publicity, for the land governs itself in its own way, and is always in its own way, which is by no means ours, very happy. The Thakurs live, each in his own castle on some rock-faced hill, much as they lived in the days of Tod; though their chances of distinguishing themselves, except in the school, and dispensary line, are strictly limited. Nominally, they pay *chutoond*, or a sixth of their revenues to the State, and are under feudal obligations to supply their Head with so many horsemen per thousand rupees; but whether the *chutoond* justifies its name and what is the exact extent of the "tail" leviable, they, and perhaps the Rajputana Agency, alone know. They are quiet, give no trouble except to the wild boar, and personally are magnificent men to look at. The Rajput shows his breeding in his hands and feet, which are almost disproportionately small, and as well shaped as those of a woman. His stirrups and sword-handles are even more unusable by Westerns than those elsewhere in India, whereas the Bhil's knife-handle gives as large a grip as an English one. Now the little Bhil is an aborigine, which is humiliating to think of. His tongue, which may frequently be heard in the City, seems to possess some variant of the Zulu click, which gives it a weird and unearthly character. From the main gate of the City the Englishman climbed uphill towards the Palace and the Jugdesh Temple built by one Juggat

Singh at the beginning of the last century. This building must be — but ignorance is a bad guide — Jain in character. From basement to the stone socket of the temple flagstaff, it is carved in high relief with elephants, men, gods, and monsters in friezes of wearying profusion.

The management of the temple have daubed a large portion of the building with whitewash, for which their revenues should be "cut" for a year or two. The main shrine holds a large brazen image of Garuda, and, in the corners of the courtyard of the main pile, are shrines to Mahadeo, and the jovial, pot-bellied Ganesh. There is no repose in this architecture, and the entire effect is one of repulsion; for the clustered figures of man and brute seem always on the point of bursting into unclean, wriggling life. But it may be that the builders of this form of house desired to put the fear of all their many gods into the hearts of the worshippers.

From the temple whose steps are worn smooth by the feet of men, and whose courts are full of the faint smell of stale flowers and old incense, the Englishman went to the Palaces which crown the highest hill overlooking the City. Here, too, whitewash had been unsparingly applied, but the excuse was that the stately fronts and the pierced screens were built of a perishable stone which needed protection against the weather. One projecting window in the façade of the main palace had been treated with Minton tiles. Luckily it was too far up the wall for anything more than the colour to be visible, and the pale blue against the pure white was effective.

A picture of Ganesh looks out over the main court-

yard, which is entered by a triple gate, and hard by is the place where the King's elephants fight over a low masonry wall. In the side of the hill on which the Palaces stand is built stabling for horses and elephants — proof that the architects of old must have understood their business thoroughly. The Palace is not a "show place," and, consequently, the Englishman did not see much of the interior. But he passed through open gardens with tanks and pavilions, very cool and restful, till he came suddenly upon the Pichola lake, and forgot altogether about the Palace. He found a sheet of steel-blue water, set in purple and grey hills, bound in, on one side, by marble bunds, the fair white walls of the Palace, and the grey, time-worn ones of the city; and, on the other, fading away through the white of shallow water, and the soft green of weed, marsh, and rank-pastured river-field, into the land.

To enjoy open water thoroughly, live for a certain number of years barred from anything better than the yearly swell and shrinkage of one of the Five Rivers, and then come upon two and a half miles of solid, restful lake, with a cool wind blowing off it and little waves spitting against the piers of a veritable, albeit hideously ugly, boat-house. On the faith of an exile from the Sea, you will not stay long among Palaces, be they never so lovely, or in little rooms panelled with Dutch tiles.

And here follows a digression. There is no life so good as the life of a loafer who travels by rail and road; for all things and all people are kind to him. From the chill miseries of a dak-bungalow where they slew one hen with as much parade as the French guillo-

tined Pranzini, to the well-ordered sumptuousness of the Residency, was a step bridged over by kindly and unquestioning hospitality. So it happened that the Englishman was not only able to go upon the lake in a soft-cushioned boat, with everything handsome about him, but might, had he chosen, have killed wild-duck with which the lake swarms.

The mutter of water under a boat's nose was a pleasant thing to hear once more. Starting at the head of the lake, he found himself shut out from sight of the main sheet of water in a loch bounded by a sunk, broken bund to steer across which was a matter of some nicety. Beyond that lay a second pool, spanned by a narrow-arched bridge built, men said, long before the City of the Rising Sun, which is little more than three hundred years old. The bridge connects the City with Brahmapura — a white-walled enclosure filled with many Brahmins and ringing with the noise of their conches. Beyond the bridge, the body of the lake, with the City running down to it, comes into full view; and Providence has arranged for the benefit of such as delight in colours, that the Rajputni shall wear the most striking tints that she can buy in the bazaars, in order that she may beautify the ghâts where she comes to bathe.

The bathing-ledge at the foot of the City wall was lighted with women clad in raw vermilion, dull red, indigo and sky-blue, saffron and pink and turquoise; the water faithfully doubling everything. But the first impression was of the unreality of the sight, for the Englishman found himself thinking of the Simla Fine Arts Exhibition and the overdaring amateurs who had striven to reproduce scenes such as these. Then a

woman rose up, and clasping her hands behind her head, looked at the passing boat, and the ripples spread out from her waist, in blinding white silver, far across the water. As a picture, a daringly insolent picture, it was superb.

The boat turned aside to shores where huge turtles were lying, and a stork had built her a nest, big as a haycock, in a withered tree, and a bevy of coots were flapping and gabbling in the weeds or between great leaves of the *Victoria regia* — an "escape" from the State Gardens. Here were divers and waders, kingfishers and snaky-necked birds of the cormorant family, but no duck. They had seen the guns in the boat and were flying to and fro in companies across the lake, or settling — wise things! — in the glare of the sun on the water. The lake was swarming with them, but they seemed to know exactly how far a twelve-bore would carry. Perhaps their knowledge had been gained from the Englishman at the Residency. Later, as the sun left the lake, and the hills began to glow like opals, the boat made her way to the shallow side of the lake, through fields of watergrass and dead lotus-raffle that rose as high as the bows, and clung lovingly about the rudder, and parted with the noise of silk when it is torn. There she waited for the fall of twilight when the duck would come home to bed, and the Englishman sprawled upon the cushions in deep content and laziness, as he looked across to where two marble Palaces floated upon the waters, and saw all the glory and beauty of the City, and wondered whether Tod, in cocked hat and stiff stock, had ever come shooting among the reeds, and, if so, how in the world he had ever managed to bowl over. . . .

"Duck and drake, by Jove! Confiding beasts, weren't they. Hi! Lalla, jump out and get them!" It was a brutal thing, this double-barrelled murder perpetrated in the silence of the marsh when the kingly wild-duck came back from his wanderings with his mate at his side, but — but — the birds were very good to eat.

If the Venetian owned the Pichola Sagar he might say with justice: "See it and die." But it is better to live and go to dinner, and strike into a new life — that of the men who bear the hat-mark on their brow as plainly as the well-born native carries the *trisul* of Shiva.

They are of the same caste as the toilers on the Frontier — tough, bronzed men, with wrinkles at the corners of the eyes, gotten by looking across much sun-glare. When they would speak of horses they mention Arab ponies, and their talk, for the most part, drifts Bombaywards, or to Abu, which is their Simla. By these things the traveller may see that he is far away from the Presidency; and will presently learn that he is in a land where the railway is an incident and not an indispensable luxury. Folk tell strange stories of drives in bullock-carts in the rains, of break-downs in nullahs fifty miles from everywhere, and of elephants that used to sink for rest and refreshment half-way across swollen streams. Every place here seems fifty miles from everywhere, and the legs of a horse are regarded as the only natural means of locomotion. Also, and this to the Indian Cockney, who is accustomed to the bleached or office man, is curious, there are to be found many veritable "tiger-men" — not story-spinners, but such as have, in their wanderings from Bikaneer to

Indore, dropped their tiger in the way of business. They are enthusiastic over princelings of little known fiefs, lords of austere estates perched on the tops of unthrifty hills, hard riders, and good sportsmen. And five, six, yes fully nine hundred miles to the northward, lives the sister branch of the same caste — the men who swear by Pathan, Biluch, and Brahui, with whom they have shot or broken bread.

There is a saying in Upper India that the more desolate the country, the greater the certainty of finding a Padre-Sahib. The proverb seems to hold good in Udaipur, where the Scotch Presbyterian Mission have a post, and others at Todgarh to the north and elsewhere. To arrive, under Providence, at the cure of souls through the curing of bodies certainly seems the rational method of conversion; and this is exactly what the Missions are doing. Their Padre in Udaipur is also an M.D., and of him a rather striking tale is told. Conceiving that the City could bear another hospital in addition to the State one, he took furlough, went home, and there, by crusade and preaching, raised sufficient money for the scheme, so that none might say that he was beholden to the State. Returning, he built his hospital, a very model of neatness and comfort, and, opening the operation-book, announced his readiness to see any one and every one who was sick. How the call was and is now responded to, the dry records of that book will show; and the name of the Padre-Sahib is honoured, as these ears have heard, throughout Udaipur and far around. The faith that sends a man into the wilderness, and the secular energy which enables him to cope with an ever-growing demand for medical aid, must, in time, find their reward. If

patience and unwearying self-sacrifice carry any merit, they should do so soon. To-day the people are willing enough to be healed, and the general influence of the Padre-Sahib is very great. But beyond that. . . . Still it was impossible to judge aright.

VIII

DIVERS PASSAGES OF SPEECH AND ACTION WHENCE THE NATURE, ARTS, AND DISPOSITION OF THE KING AND HIS SUBJECTS MAY BE OBSERVED.

In this land men tell "sad stories of the death of Kings" not easily found elsewhere; and also speak of *sati*, which is generally supposed to be out of date in a manner which makes it seem very near and vivid. Be pleased to listen to some of the tales, but with all the names cut out, because a King has just as much right to have his family affairs respected as has a British householder paying income tax.

Once upon a time, that is to say when the British power was well established in the land and there were railways, was a King who lay dying for many days, and all, including the Englishmen about him, knew that his end was certain. But he had chosen to lie in an outer court or pleasure-house of his Palace; and with him were some twenty of his favourite wives. The place in which he lay was very near to the City; and there was a fear that his womankind should, on his death, going mad with grief, cast off their veils and run out into the streets, uncovered before all men. In which case nothing, not even the power of the Press, and the locomotive, and the telegraph, and cheap education and enlightened municipal councils, could have saved them from

the burning-pyre, for they were the wives of a King. So the Political did his best to induce the dying man to go to the Fort of the City, a safe place close to the regular zenana, where all the women could be kept within walls. He said that the air was better in the Fort, but the King refused; and that he would recover in the Fort; but the King refused. After some days, the latter turned and said: "*Why* are you so keen, Sahib, upon getting my old bones up to the Fort?" Driven to his last defences, the Political said simply: "Well, Maharana Sahib, the place is close to the road, you see, and . . ." The King saw and said: "Oh, *that's* it? I've been puzzling my brain for four days to find out what on earth you were driving at. I'll go to-night." "But there may be some difficulty," began the Political. "You think so," said the King. "If I only hold up my little finger, the women will obey me. Go now, and come back in five minutes, and all will be ready for departure." As a matter of fact, the Political withdrew for the space of fifteen minutes, and gave orders that the conveyances which he had kept in readiness day and night should be got ready. In fifteen minutes those twenty women, with their handmaidens, were packed and ready for departure; and the King died later at the Fort, and nothing happened. Here the Englishman asked why a frantic woman must of necessity become a *sati*, and felt properly abashed when he was told that she *must*. There was nothing else for her if she went out unveiled.

The rush-out forces the matter. And, indeed, if you consider the matter from the Rajput point of view it does.

Then followed a very grim tale of the death of another

King; of the long vigil by his bedside, before he was taken off the bed to die upon the ground; of the shutting of a certain mysterious door behind the bed-head, which shutting was followed by a rustle of women's dress; of a walk on the top of the palace, to escape the heated air of the sick room; and then, in the grey dawn, the wail upon wail breaking from the zenana as the news of the King's death went in. "I never wish to hear anything more horrible and awful in my life. You could see nothing. You could only hear the poor wretches," said the Political, with a shiver.

The last resting-place of the Maharanas of Udaipur is at Ahar, a little village two miles east of the City. Here they go down in their robes of state, their horse following behind, and here the Political saw, after the death of a Maharana, the dancing-girls dancing before the poor white ashes, the musicians playing among the cenotaphs, and the golden hookah, sword, and water-vessel laid out for the naked soul doomed to hover twelve days round the funeral pyre, before it could depart on its journey toward a fresh birth. Once, in a neighbouring State it is said, one of the dancing-girls stole a march in the next world's precedence and her lord's affections, upon the legitimate queens. The affair happened, by the way, after the Mutiny, and was accomplished with great pomp in the light of day. Subsequently those who might have stopped it but did not, were severely punished. The girl said that she had no one to look to but the dead man, and followed him, to use Tod's formula, "through the flames." It would be curious to know whether *sati* is altogether abolished among these lonely hills in the walled holds of the Thakurs.

But to return from the burning-ground to modern Udaipur, as at present worked under the Maharana and his Prime Minister Rae Punna Lal, *C. I. E.* To begin with, His Highness is a racial anomaly in that, judged by the strictest European standard, he is a man of temperate life, the husband of one wife whom he married before he was chosen to the throne after the death of the Maharana Sujjun Singh in 1884. Sujjun Singh died childless and gave no hint of his desires as to succession and — omitting all the genealogical and political reasons which would drive a man mad — Futteh Singh was chosen, by the Thakurs, from the Seorati Branch of the family which Sangram Singh II. founded. He is thus a younger son of a younger branch of a younger family, which lucid statement should suffice to explain everything. The man who could deliberately unravel the succession of any one of the Rajput States would be perfectly capable of explaining the politics of all the Frontier tribes from Jumrood to Quetta.

Roughly speaking, the Maharana and the Prime Minister — in whose family the office has been hereditary for many generations — divide the power of the State. They control, more or less, the Mahand Raj Sabha or Council of Direction and Revision. This is composed of many of the Rawats and Thakurs of the State, *and* the Poet Laureate who, under a less genial administration, would be presumably the Registrar. There are also District Officers, Officers of Customs, Superintendents of the Mint, Masters of the Horses, and Supervisor of Doles, which last is pretty and touching. The State officers itself, and the Englishman's investigations failed to unearth any Bengalis. The Commandant of the State

Army, about five thousand men of all arms, is a retired non-commissioned officer, a Mr. Lonergan; who, as the medals on his breast attest, has done the State some service, and now in his old age rejoices in the local rank of Major-General, and teaches the Maharaja's guns to make uncommonly good practice. The Infantry are smart and well set up, while the Cavalry — rare thing in Native States — have a distinct notion of keeping their accoutrements clean. They are, further, well mounted on light, wiry Mewar and Kathiawar horses. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that the Pathan comes down with his pickings from the Punjab to Udaipur, and finds a market there for animals that were much better employed in Our service — but the complaint is a stale one. Let us see, later on, what the Jodhpur stables hold; and then formulate an indictment against the Government. So much for the indigenous administration of Udaipur. The one drawback in the present Maharaja, from the official point of view, is his want of education. He is a thoroughly good man, but was not brought up with the kingship before his eyes, consequently he is not an English-speaking man.

There is a story told of him which is worth the repeating. An Englishman who flattered himself that he could speak the vernacular fairly well, paid him a visit and discoursed with a round mouth. The Maharana heard him politely, and turning to a satellite, demanded a translation; which was given. Then said the Maharana: — "Speak to him in *Angrezi.*" The *Angrezi* spoken by the interpreter was Urdu as the Sahibs speak it, and the Englishman, having ended his conference, departed abashed. But this backwardness is eminently suited

to a place like Udaipur, and a European prince is not always a desirable thing. The curious and even startling simplicity of his life is worth preserving. Here is a specimen of one of his days. Rising at four — and the dawn can be bitterly chill — he bathes and prays after the custom of his race, and at six is ready to take in hand the first instalment of the day's work which comes before him through his Prime Minister, and occupies him for three or four hours till the first meal of the day is ready. At two o'clock he attends the Mahand Raj Sabha, and works till five, retiring at a healthily primitive hour. He is said to have his hand fairly, firmly upon the reins of rule, and to know as much as most monarchs know of the way in which his revenues — some thirty lakhs — are disposed of. The Prime Minister's career has been a chequered and interesting one, including a dismissal from power (this was worked by the Queens from behind the screen), an arrest, and an attack with swords which all but ended in his murder. He has not so much power as his predecessors had, for the reason that the present Maharaja allows little but tiger-shooting to distract him from the supervision of the State. His Highness, by the way, is a first-class shot and has bagged eighteen tigers already. He preserves his game carefully, and permission to kill tigers is not readily obtainable.

A curious instance of the old order giving place to the new is in process of evolution and deserves notice. The Prime Minister's son, Futteh Lal, a boy of twenty years old, has been educated at the Mayo College, Ajmir, and speaks and writes English. There are few native officials in the State who do this; and the consequence is

that the lad has won a very fair insight into State affairs, and knows generally what is going forward both in the Eastern and Western spheres of the little Court. In time he may qualify for direct administrative powers, and Udaipur will be added to the list of the States that are governed English fashion. What the end will be, after three generations of Princes and Dewans have been put through the mill of the Rajkumar Colleges, those who live will learn.

More interesting is the question, For how long can the vitality of a people whose life was arms be suspended? Men in the North say that, by the favour of the Government which brings peace, the Sikh Sirdars are rotting on their lands; and the Rajput Thakurs say of themselves that they are growing rusty. The old, old problem forces itself on the most unreflective mind at every turn in the gay streets of Udaipur. A Frenchman might write: "Behold there the horse of the Rajput — foaming, panting, caracoling, but always fettered with his head so majestic upon his bosom so amply filled with a generous heart. He rages, but he does not advance. See there the destiny of the Rajput who bestrides him, and upon whose left flank bounds the sabre useless — the haberdashery of the ironmonger only! Pity the horse in reason, for that life there is his *raison d'être.* Pity ten thousand times more the Rajput, for he has no *raison d'être.* He is an anachronism in a blue turban."

The Gaul might be wrong, but Tod wrote things which seem to support this view, in the days when he wished to make "buffer-states" of the land he loved so well.

Let us visit the Durbar Gardens, where little naked Cupids are trampling upon fountains of fatted fish, all

in bronze, where there are cypresses and red paths, and a deer-park full of all varieties of deer, besides two growling, fluffy little panther cubs, a black panther who is the Prince of Darkness and a gentleman, and a terrace-full of tigers, bears, and Guzerat lions brought from the King of Oudh's sale.

IX

OF THE PIG-DRIVE WHICH WAS A PANTHER-KILLING, AND OF THE DEPARTURE TO CHITOR.

Above the Durbar Gardens lie low hills, in which the Maharana keeps, very strictly guarded, his pig and his deer, and anything else that may find shelter in the low scrub or under the scattered boulders. These preserves are scientifically parcelled out with high, red-stone walls; and here and there are dotted tiny shooting-stands — masonry sentry-boxes, in which five or six men may sit at ease and shoot. It had been arranged to entertain the Englishmen who were gathered at the Residency to witness the investiture of the King with the G. C. S. I. — that there should be a little pig-drive in front of the Kala Odey or black shooting-box. The Rajput is a man and a brother, in respect that he will ride, shoot, eat pig, and drink strong waters like an Englishman. Of the pig-hunting he makes almost a religious duty, and of the wine-drinking no less. Read how desperately they used to ride in Udaipur at the beginning of the century when Tod, always in his cocked hat to be sure, counted up the tale of accidents at the end of the day's sport.

There is something unfair in shooting pig; but each man who went out consoled himself with the thought that it was utterly impossible to ride the brutes up the almost perpendicular hillsides, or down rocky ravines,

and that he individually would only go "just for the fun of the thing." Those who stayed behind made rude remarks on the subject of "pork butchers," and the dangers that attended shooting from a balcony. There are ways and ways of slaying pig — from the orthodox method which begins with "*The Boar — the Boar — the mighty Boar!*" overnight, and ends with a shaky bridle-hand next morn, to the sober and solitary pot-shot at dawn, from a railway embankment running through river marsh; but the perfect way is this. Get a large, four-horse break, and drive till you meet an unlimited quantity of pad-elephants waiting at the foot of rich hill-preserves. Mount slowly and with dignity, and go in swinging procession, by the marble-faced border of one of the most lovely lakes on earth. Strike off on a semi-road, semi-hill-torrent path through unthrifty, thorny jungle, and so climb up and up and up, till you see, spread like a map below, the lake and the Palace and the City, hemmed in by the sea of hills that lies between Udaipur and Mount Abu a hundred miles away. Then take your seat in a comfortable chair, in a fine two-storied Grand Stand, with an awning spread atop to keep off the sun, while the Rawat of Amet and the Prime Minister's heir — no less — invite you to take your choice of the many rifles spread on a ledge at the front of the building. This, gentlemen who screw your pet ponies at early dawn after the sounder that vanishes into cover soon as sighted, or painfully follow the tiger through the burning heats of Mewar in May, this is shooting after the fashion of Ouida — in musk and ambergris and patchouli.

It is demoralising. One of the best and hardest riders

of the Lahore Tent Club in the old days, as the boars of Bouli Lena Singh knew well, said openly: "This is a first-class scheme," and fell to testing his triggers as though he had been a pot-hunter from his birth. Derision and threats of exposure moved him not. "Give me an arm-chair!" said he. "This is the proper way to deal with pig!" And he put up his feet on the ledge and stretched himself.

There were many weapons to choose from the double-barrelled '500 Express, whose bullet is a tearing, rending shell, to the Rawat of Amet's regulation military Martini-Henri. A profane public at the Residency had suggested clubs and saws as amply sufficient for the work in hand. Here they were moved by envy, which passion was ten-fold increased when — but this comes later on. The beat was along a deep gorge in the hills, flanked on either crest by stone walls, manned with beaters. Immediately opposite the shooting-box, the wall on the upper or higher hill made a sharp turn down-hill, contracting the space through which the pig would have to pass to a gut which was variously said to be from one hundred and fifty to four hundred yards across. Most of the shooting was up or down hill.

A philanthropic desire not to murder more Bhils than were absolutely necessary to maintain a healthy current of human life in the Hilly Tracts, coupled with a well-founded dread of the hinder, or horse, end of a double-barrelled '500 Express which would be sure to go off both barrels together, led the Englishman to take a gunless seat in the background. Then a silence fell upon the party, and very far away up the gorge the heated afternoon air was cut by the shrill tremolo squeal of the

Bhil beaters. Now a man may be in no sort or fashion a *shikari* — may hold Buddhistic objections to the slaughter of living things — but there is something in the extraordinary noise of an agitated Bhil, which makes even the most peaceful mortals get up and yearn, like Tartarin of Tarascon for "lions," always at a safe distance be it understood. As the beat drew nearer, under the squealing — the "*ul-al-lu-lu-lu*" — was heard a long-drawn bittern-like boom of "*So-oor!*" "*So-oor!*" (Pig! Pig!) and the crashing of boulders. The guns rose in their places, forgetting that each and all had merely come "to see the fun," and began to fumble among the little mounds of cartridges under the chairs. Presently, tripping delicately over the rocks, a pig stepped out of a cactus-bush, and the fusillade began. The dust flew and the branches chipped, but the pig went on — a blue-grey shadow almost undistinguishable against the rocks, and took no harm. "Sighting shots," said the guns, sulkily. The beat came nearer, and then the listener discovered what the bubbling scream was like; for he forgot straightway about the beat and went back to the dusk of an Easter Monday in the Gardens of the Crystal Palace before the bombardment of Kars, "set piece ten thousand feet square" had been illuminated, and about five hundred 'Arries were tickling a thousand 'Arriets. Their giggling and nothing else was the noise of the Bhil. So curiously does Sydenham and Western Rajputana meet. Then came another pig, who was smitten to the death and rolled down among the bushes, drawing his last breath in a human and horrible manner.

But full on the crest of the hill, blown along — there is no other word to describe it — like a ball of thistle-

down, passed a brown shadow, and men cried: "*Bagheera*," or "Panther!" according to their nationalities, and blazed. The shadow leaped the wall that had turned the pig downhill, and vanished among the cactus. "Never mind," said the Prime Minister's son, consolingly, "we'll beat the other side of the hill afterwards and get him yet." "Oh, he's a mile off by this time," said the guns; but the Rawat of Amet, a magnificent young man, smiled a sweet smile and said nothing. More pig passed and were slain, and many more broke back through the beaters who presently came through the cover in scores. They were in russet green and red uniform, each man bearing a long spear, and the hillside was turned on the instant to a camp of Robin Hood's foresters. Then they brought up the dead from behind bushes and under rocks — among others a twenty-seven-inch brute who bore on his flank (all pigs shot in a beat are *ex-officio* boars) a hideous, half-healed scar, big as a man's hand, of a bullet wound. Express bullets are ghastly things in their effects, for, as the *shikari* is never tired of demonstrating, they knock the inside of animals into pulp.

The second beat, of the reverse side of the hill, had barely begun when the panther returned — uneasily as if something were keeping her back — much lower down the hill. Then the face of the Rawat of Amet changed, as he brought his gun up to his shoulder. Looking at him as he fired, one forgot all about the Mayo College at which he had been educated, and remembered only some trivial and out-of-date affairs, in which his forefathers had been concerned, when a bridegroom, with his bride at his side, charged down

the slope of the Chitor road and died among Akbar's men. There are stories connected with the House of Amet, which are told in Mewar to-day. The young man's face, for as short a time as it takes to pull trigger and see where the bullet falls, was a white light upon all these tales.

Then the mask shut down, as he clicked out the cartridge, and, very sweetly, gave it as his opinion that some other gun, not his own, had bagged the panther who lay shot through the spine, feebly trying to drag herself downhill into cover. It is an awful thing to see a big beast die, when the soul is wrenched out of the struggling body in ten seconds. Wild horses shall not make the Englishman disclose the exact number of shots that were fired. It is enough to say that four Englishmen, now scattered to the four winds of heaven, are each morally certain that he and he alone shot that panther. In time, when distance and the mirage of the sands of Uodhpur shall have softened the harsh outlines of truth, the Englishman who did *not* fire a shot will come to believe that he was the real slayer, and will carefully elaborate that lie.

A few minutes after the murder, a two-year-old cub came trotting along the hillside, and was bowled over by a very pretty shot behind the left ear and through the palate. Then the beaters' lances showed through the bushes, and the guns began to realise that they had allowed to escape, or had driven back by their fire, a multitude of pig.

This ended the beat, and the procession returned to the Residency to heap dead panthers upon those who had called them "pork butchers," and to stir up the lake of

envy with the torpedo of brilliant description. The Englishman's attempt to compare the fusillade which greeted the panther to the continuous drumming of a ten-barrelled Nordenfeldt was, however, coldly received. Thus harshly is truth treated all the world over.

And then, after a little time, came the end, and a return to the road in search of new countries. But shortly before the departure, the Padre-Sahib, who knows every one in Udaipur, read a sermon in a sentence. The Maharana's investiture, which has already been described in the Indian papers, had taken place, and the carriages, duly escorted by the Erinpura Horse, were returning to the Residency. In a niche of waste land, under the shadow of the main gate, a place strewn with rubbish and shards of pottery, a dilapidated old man was trying to control his horse and a *hookah* on the saddle-bow. The blundering garron had been made restive by the rush past, and the *hookah* all but fell from the hampered hands. "See that man," said the Padre, tersely. "That's —— Singh. He intrigued for the throne not so very long ago." It was a pitiful little picture, and needed no further comment.

For the benefit of the loafer it should be noted that Udaipur will never be pleasant or accessible until the present Mail Contractors have been hanged. They are extortionate and untruthful, and their one set of harness and one tonga are as rotten as pears. However, the weariness of the flesh must be great indeed, to make the wanderer blind to the beauties of a journey by clear starlight and in biting cold to Chitor. About six miles from Udaipur, the granite hills close in upon the road, and the air grows warmer until, with a rush and a rattle, the

tonga swings through the great Dobarra, the gate in the double circle of hills round Udaipur on to the pastures of Mewar. More than once the Girwa has been a death-trap to those who rashly entered it; and an army has been cut up on the borders of the Pichola Lake. Even now the genius of the place is strong upon the hills, and as he felt the cold air from the open ground without the barrier, the Englishman found himself repeating the words of one of the Hat-marked tribe whose destiny kept him within the Dobarra. "You must have a hobby of some kind in these parts or you'll die." Very lovely is Udaipur, and thrice pleasant are a few days spent within her gates, but . . . read what Tod said who stayed two years behind the Dobarra, and accepted the deserts of Marwar as a delightful change.

It is good to be free, a wanderer upon the highways, knowing not what to-morrow will bring forth — whether the walled-in niceties of an English household, rich in all that makes life fair and desirable, or a sleepless night in the society of a goods-*cum*-booking-office-*cum*-parcels-clerk, on fifteen rupees a month, who tells in stilted English the story of his official life, while the telegraph gibbers like a maniac once in an hour and then is dumb, and the pariah-dogs fight and howl over the cotton-bales on the platform.

Verily, there is no life like life on the road — when the skies are cool and all men are kind.

X

A LITTLE OF THE HISTORY OF CHITOR, AND THE MALPRACTICES OF A SHE-ELEPHANT.

THERE is a certain want of taste, an almost actual indecency, in seeing the sun rise on the earth. Until the heat-haze begins and the distances thicken, Nature is so very naked that the Actæon who has surprised her dressing, blushes. Sunrise on the plains of Mewar is an especially brutal affair.

The moon was burnt out and the air was bitterly cold, when the Englishman headed due east in his tonga, and the patient sowar behind nodded and yawned in the saddle. There was no warning of the day's advent. The horses were unharnessed, at one halting-stage, in the thick, soft shadows of night, and ere their successors had limped under the bar, a raw and cruel light was upon all things, so that the Englishman could see every rent seam in the rocks around. A little further, and he came upon the black bulk of Chitor between him and the morning sun. It has already been said that the Fort resembles a man-of-war. Every distant view heightens this impression, for the swell of the sides follows the form of a ship, and the bastions on the south wall make the sponsons in which the machine-guns are mounted. From bow to stern, the thing more than three miles long, is between three and five hundred feet high, and from one-half to one-

quarter of a mile broad. Have patience, now, to listen to a rough history of Chitor.

In the beginning, no one knows clearly who scraped the hillsides of the hill rising out of the bare plain, and made of it a place of strength. It is written that, eleven and a half centuries ago, Bappa Rawul, the demi-god whose stature was twenty cubits, whose loin-cloth was five hundred feet long, and whose spear was beyond the power of mortal man to lift, took Chitor from "Man Singh, the Mori Prince," and wrote the first chapter of the history of Mewar, which he received ready-made from Man Singh who, if the chronicles speak sooth, was his uncle. Many and very marvellous legends cluster round the name of Bappa Rawul; and he is said to have ended his days far away from India, in Khorasan, where he married an unlimited number of the Daughters of Heth, and was the father of all the Nowshera Pathans. Some who have wandered, by the sign-posts of inscription, into the fogs of old time, aver that, two centuries before Bappa Rawul took Chitor the Mori division of the Pramar Rajputs, who are the ruling family of Mewar, had found a hold in Bhilwara, and for four centuries before that time had ruled in Kathiawar; and had royally sacked and slain, and been sacked and slain in turn. But these things are for the curious and the scholar, and not for the reader who reads lightly. Nine princes succeeded Bappa, between 728 and 1068 A.D., and among these was one Alluji, who built a Jain tower upon the brow of the hill, for in those days, though the Sun was worshipped, men were all Jains.

And here they lived and sallied into the plains, and fought and increased the borders of their kingdom, or

were suddenly and stealthily murdered, or stood shoulder to shoulder against the incursions of the "Devil men" from the north. In 1150 A.D. was born Samar Singh, and he married into the family of Prithi Raj, the last Hindu Emperor of Delhi, who was at feud, in regard to a succession question, with the Prince of Kanauj. In the war that followed, Kanauj, being hard pressed by Prithi Raj, and Samar Singh, called Shahabuddin Ghori to his aid. At first, Samar Singh and Prithi Raj broke the army of the Northern somewhere in the lower Punjab, but two years later Shahabuddin came again, and, after three days' fighting on the banks of the Kaggar, slew Samar Singh, captured and murdered Prithi Raj, and sacked Delhi and Amber, while Samar Singh's favourite queen became *sati* at Chitor. But another wife, a princess of Patun, kept her life, and when Shahabuddin sent down Kutbuddin to waste her lands, led the Rajput army, in person, from Chitor, and defeated Kutbuddin.

Then followed confusion, through eleven turbulent reigns that the annalist has failed to unravel. Once in the years betweeen 1193 and the opening of the fourteenth century, Chitor must have been taken by the Mussulman, for it is written that one prince "recovered Chitor and made the name of Rana to be recognised by all." Six princes were slain in battles against the Mussulman, in vain attempts to clear the land from the presence of the infidel.

Then Ala-ud-din Khilji, the Pathan Emperor, swept the country to the Dekkan. In those days, and these things are confusedly set down as having happened at the end of the thirteenth century, a relative of Rana Lakhsman Singh, the then Rana of Chitor, had married

a Rajput princess of Ceylon — Pudmini, "And she was fairest of all flesh on earth." Her fame was sung through the land by the poets, and she became, in some sort, the Helen of Chitor. Ala-ud-din heard of her beauty and promptly besieged the Fort. When he found his enterprise too difficult, he prayed that he might be permitted to see Pudmini's face in a mirror, and this wish, so says the tale, was granted. Knowing that the Rajput was a gentleman, he entered Chitor almost unarmed, saw the face in the mirror, and was well treated; the husband of the fair Pudmini accompanying him, in return, to the camp at the foot of the hill. Like Raja Runjeet in the ballad the Rajput he —

> ". . . trusted a Mussulman's word
> Wah! Wah! Trust a liar to lie.
> Out of his eyrie they tempted my bird,
> Fettered his wings that he could not fly."

Pudmini's husband was caught by a trick, and Ala-ud-din demanded Pudmini as the price of his return. The Rajputs here showed that they too could scheme, and sent, in great state, Pudmini's litter to the besiegers' intrenchments. But there was no Pudmini in the litter, and her following of handmaidens was a band of seven hundred armed men. Thus, in the confusion of a camp-fight, Pudmini's husband was rescued, and Ala-ud-din's soldiery followed hard on his heels to the gates of Chitor, where the best and bravest on the rock were killed before Ala-ud-din withdrew, only to return soon after and, with a doubled army, besiege in earnest. His first attack men called the half-sack of Chitor, for, though he failed to win within the walls, he killed the flower of the Rajputs.

The second attack ended in the first sack and the awful *sati* of the women on the rock.

When everything was hopeless and the very terrible Goddess, who lives in the bowels of Chitor, had spoken and claimed for death eleven out of the twelve of the Rana's sons, all who were young or fair women betook themselves to a great underground chamber, and the fires were lit and the entrance was walled up and they died. The Rajputs opened the gates and fought till they could fight no more, and Ala-ud-din the victorious entered a wasted and desolated city. He wrecked everything except only the palace of Pudmini and the old Jain tower before mentioned. That was all he could do, for there were few men alive of the defenders of Chitor when the day was won, and the women were ashes underground.

Ajai Singh, the one surviving son of Lakshman Singh, had at his father's insistence, escaped from Chitor to "carry on the line" when better days should come. He brought up Hamir, son of one of his elder brothers, to be a thorn in the side of the invader, and Hamir overthrew Maldeo, chief of Jhalore and vassal of Ala-ud-din, into whose hands Ala-ud-din had, not too generously, given what was left of Chitor. So the Sesodias came to their own again, and the successors of Hamir extended their kingdoms and rebuilt Chitor, as kings know how to rebuild cities in a land where human labour and life are cheaper than bread and water. For two centuries, saith Tod, Mewar flourished exceedingly and was the paramount kingdom of all Rajasthan. Greatest of all the successors of Hamir, was Kumbha Rana who, when the Ghilzai dynasty was rotting away and Viceroys declared

themselves kings, met, defeated, took captive, and released without ransom, Mahmoud of Malwa. Kumbha Rana built a Tower of Victory, nine stories high, to commemorate this and the other successes of his reign, and the tower stands to-day a mark for miles across the plains.

But the well-established kingdom weakened, and the rulers took favourites and disgusted their best supporters — after the immemorial custom of too prosperous rulers. Also they murdered one another. In 1535 A.D. Bahadur Shah, King of Gujarat, seeing the decay, and remembering how one of his predecessors, together with Mahmoud of Malwa, had been humbled by Mewar in years gone by, set out to take his revenge of Time and Mewar then ruled by Rana Bikrmajit, who had made a new capital at Deola. Bikrmajit did not stay to give battle in that place. His chiefs were out of hand, and Chitor was the heart and brain of Mewar; so he marched thither, and the Gods were against him. Bahadur Shah mined one of the Chitor bastions, and wiped out in the explosion the Hara Prince of Boondee, with five hundred followers. Jowahir Bae, Bikrmajit's mother, headed a sally from the walls, and was slain. There were Frank gunners among Bahadur Shah's forces, and they hastened the end. The Rajputs made a second *johur*, a sacrifice greater than the sacrifice of Pudmini; and thirteen thousand were blown up in the magazines, or stabbed or poisoned, before the gates were opened and the defenders rushed down.

Out of the carnage was saved Udai Singh, a babe of the Blood Royal, who grew up to be a coward, and a shame to his line. The story of his preservation is written large in Tod, and Edwin Arnold sings it. Read

it, who are interested. But, when Udai Singh came to the throne of Chitor, through blood and misrule, after Bahadur Shah had withdrawn from the wreck of the Fort, Akbar sat on the throne of Delhi, and it was written that few people should withstand the "Guardian of Mankind." Moreover, Udai Singh was the slave of a woman. It was Akbar's destiny to subdue the Rajputs, and to win many of them to his own service; sending a Rajput Prince of Amber to get him far-away Arrakan. Akbar marched against Chitor once, and was repulsed; the woman who ruled Udai Singh heading a charge against the besiegers because of the love she bore to her lover. Something of this sort had happened in Ala-ud-din's time, and, like Ala-ud-din, Akbar returned and sat down, in a huge camp, before Chitor in 1568 A.D. Udai Singh fled what was coming; and because the Goddess of Chitor demands always that a crowned head must fall if the defence of her home is to be successful, Chitor fell as it had fallen before — in a *johur* of thousands, a last rush of the men, and the entry of the conqueror into a reeking, ruined slaughter-pen. Akbar's sack was the most terrible of the three, for he killed everything that had life upon the rock, and wrecked and overturned and spoiled. The wonder, the lasting wonder, is that he did not destroy Kumbha Rana's Tower of Victory, the memorial of the defeat of a Mahometan prince. With the third sack the glory of Chitor departed, and Udai Singh founded himself a new capital, the city of Udaipur. Though Chitor was recovered in Jehangir's time by Udai Singh's grandson, it was never again made the capital of Mewar. It stood, and rotted where it stood, till enlightened and loyal feudatories, in the present years of grace,

made attempts, with the help of Executive Engineers, to sweep it up and keep it in repair. The above is roughly, very roughly indeed, the tale of the sacks of Chitor.

Follows an interlude, for the study even of inaccurate history is indigestible to many. There was an elephant at Chitor, to take birds of passage up the hill, and she — she was fifty-one years old, and her name was Gerowlia — came to the dak-bungalow for the Englishman. Let not the word dak-bungalow deceive any man into believing that there is even moderate comfort at Chitor. Gerowlia waited in the sunshine, and chuckled to herself like a female pauper when she receives snuff. Her *mahout* said that he would go away for a drink of water. So he walked, and walked, and walked, till he disappeared on the stone-strewn plains, and the Englishman was left alone with Gerowlia, aged fifty-one. She had been tied by the chain on her near hind leg to a pillar of the verandah; but the string was coir, and more an emblem of authority than a means of restraint. When she had thoroughly exhausted all the resources of the country within range of her trunk, she ate up the string and began to investigate the verandah. There was more coir string, and she ate it all, while the carpenter, who was repairing the dak-bungalow, cursed her and her ancestry from afar. About this time the Englishman was roused to a knowledge of the business, for Gerowlia, having exhausted the string, tried to come into the verandah. She had, most unwisely, been pampered with biscuits an hour before. The carpenter stood on an outcrop of rock, and said angrily: "See what damage your *hathi* has done, Sahib." "'Tisn't my *hathi*," said

the Sahib, plaintively. "You ordered it," quoth he, "and it has been here ever so long, eating up everything." He threw pieces of stone at Gerowlia, and went away. It is a terrible thing to be left alone with an unshackled elephant, even though she be a venerable spinster. Gerowlia moved round the dak-bungalow, blowing her nose in a nervous and undecided manner, and presently found some more string and thatch, which she ate. This was too much. The Englishman went out and spoke to her. She opened her mouth and salaamed; meaning thereby "biscuits." So long as she remained in this position she could do no harm.

Imagine a boundless rock-strewn plain, broken here and there by low hills, dominated by the rock of Chitor, and bisected by a single metre-gauge railway track running into the Infinite, and unrelieved by even a way-inspector's trolly. In the foreground put a brand-new dak-bungalow, furnished with a French bedstead, and nothing else; in the verandah place an embarrassed Englishman, smiling into the open mouth of an idiotic female elephant. But Gerowlia could not live on smiles alone. Finding that no food was forthcoming, she shut her mouth, and renewed her attempts to get into the verandah, and ate more thatch. To say "Hi!" to an elephant is a misdirected courtesy. It quickens the pace, and if you flick her on the trunk with a wet towel, she curls the trunk out of harm's way. Special education is necessary. A little breechless boy passed, carrying a lump of stone. "Hit her on the feet, Sahib," said he; "hit her on the feet." Gerowlia had by this time nearly scraped off her pad, and there were no signs of the *mahout*. The Englishman went out and found a tent-

peg, and returning, in the extremity of his wrath smote her bitterly on the nails of the near forefoot.

Gerowlia held up her foot to be beaten, and made the most absurd noises — squawked in fact, exactly like an old lady who has narrowly escaped being run over. She backed out of the verandah, still squawking, on three feet and in the open held up near and off forefoot alternately to be beaten. It was very pitiful, for one swing of her trunk could have knocked the Englishman flat. He ceased whacking her, but she squawked for some minutes and then fell placidly asleep in the sunshine. When the *mahout* returned, he beat her for breaking her tether exactly as the Englishman had done, but much more severely, and the ridiculous old thing hopped on three legs for fully five minutes. "Come along, Sahib," said the *mahout*. "I will show this mother of bastards who is the driver. Fat daughter of the Devil, sit down. You would eat thatch, would you? How does the iron taste?" And he gave Gerowlia a headache, which affected her temper all through the afternoon. She set off, across the railway line which runs below the rock of Chitor, into broken ground cut up with *nullahs* and covered with low scrub, over which it would have been difficult to have taken a sure-footed horse, so fragmentary and disconnected was its nature.

XI.

PROVES CONCLUSIVELY THE EXISTENCE OF THE DARK TOWER VISITED BY CHILDE ROLANDE, AND OF "BOGEY" WHO FRIGHTENS CHILDREN.

THE Gamberi River — clear as a trout-stream — runs through the waste round Chitor, and is spanned by an old bridge, very solid and massive, said to have been built before the sack of Ala-ud-din. The bridge is in the middle of the stream — the floods have raced round either end of it — and is reached by a steeply sloping stone causeway. From the bridge to the new town of Chitor, which lies at the foot of the hill, runs a straight and well-kept road, flanked on either side by the scattered remnants of old houses, and, here and there, fallen temples. The road, like the bridge, is no new thing, and is wide enough for twenty horsemen to ride abreast.

New Chitor is a very dirty, and apparently thriving, little town, full of grain-merchants and sellers of arms. The ways are barely wide enough for the elephant of dignity and the little brown babies of impudence. The Englishman went through, always on a slope painfully accentuated by Gerowlia who, with all possible respect to her years, must have been a baggage-animal and no true *Sahib's* mount. Let the local Baedeker speak for a moment: "The ascent to Chitor, which begins from within the southeast angle of the town, is nearly a mile

to the upper gate, with a slope of about 1 in 15. There are two zig-zag bends, and on the three portions thus formed, are seven gates, of which one, however, has only the basement left." This is the language of fact, which, very properly, leaves out of all account the Genius of the Place who sits at the gate nearest the new city and is with the sightseer throughout. The first impression of repulsion and awe is given by a fragment of tumbled sculpture close to a red daubed *lingam*, near the Padal Pol or lowest gate. It is a piece of frieze, and the figures of the men are worn nearly smooth by time. What is visible is finely and frankly obscene to an English mind.

The road is protected on the cliff side by a thick stone wall, loopholed for musketry, one aperture to every two feet, between fifteen and twenty feet high. This wall is being repaired throughout its length by the Maharana of Udaipur. On the hillside, among the boulders, loose stones, and *dhak*-scrub, lies stone wreckage that must have come down from the brown bastions above.

As Gerowlia laboured up the stone-shod slope, the Englishman wondered how much life had flowed down this sluice of battles, and been lost at the Padal Pol — the last and lowest gate — where, in the old days, the besieging armies put their best and bravest battalions. Once at the head of the lower slope, there is a clear run-down of a thousand yards with no chance of turning aside either to the right or left. Even as he wondered, he was brought abreast of two stone chhatris, each carrying a red daubed stone. They were the graves of two very brave men, Jeemal of Bedmore, and Kalla, who fell in Akbar's sack fighting like Rajputs. Read the story of

their deaths, and learn what manner of warriors they were. Their graves were all that spoke openly of the hundreds of struggles on the lower slope where the fight was always fiercest.

At last, after half an hour's climb, the main gate, the Ram Pol, was gained, and the Englishman passed into the City of Chitor and — then and there formed a resolution, since broken, not to write one word about it for fear that he should be set down as a babbling and a gushing enthusiast. Objects of archæological interest are duly described in an admirable little book of Chitor which, after one look, the Englishman abandoned. One cannot "do" Chitor with a guide-book. The Chaplain of the English Mission to Jehangir said the best that was to be said, when he described the place three hundred years ago, writing quaintly: "Chitor, an ancient great kingdom, the chief city so called which standeth on a mighty high hill, flat on the top, walled about at the least ten English miles. There appear to this day above a hundred churches ruined and divers fair palaces which are lodged in like manner among their ruins, as many Englishmen by the observation have guessed. Its chief inhabitants to-day are Zum and Ohim, birds and wild beasts, but the stately ruins thereof give a shadow of its beauty while it flourished in its pride." Gerowlia struck into a narrow pathway, forcing herself through garden-trees and disturbing the peacocks. An evil guide-man on the ground waved his hand, and began to speak; but was silenced. The death of Amber was as nothing to the death of Chitor — a body whence the life had been driven by riot and the sword. Men had parcelled the gardens of her palaces and the courtyards of her temples

into fields; and cattle grazed among the remnants of the shattered tombs. But over all — over rent and bastion, split temple-wall, pierced roof, and prone pillar — lay the "shadow of its beauty while it flourished in its pride." The Englishman walked into a stately palace of many rooms, where the sunlight streamed in through wall and roof, and up crazy stone stairways, held together, it seemed, by the marauding trees. In one bastion, a wind-sown peepul had wrenched a thick slab clear of the wall, but held it tight pressed in a crook of a branch, as a man holds down a fallen enemy under his elbow, shoulder, and forearm. In another place, a strange, uncanny wind sprung from nowhere, was singing all alone among the pillars of what may have been a Hall of Audience. The Englishman wandered so far in one palace that he came to an almost black-dark room, high up in a wall, and said proudly to himself: "I must be the first man who has been here;" meaning no harm or insult to any one. But he tripped and fell, and as he put out his hands, he felt that the stairs had been worn hollow and smooth by the thread of innumerable naked feet. Then he was afraid, and came away very quickly, stepping delicately over fallen friezes and bits of sculptured men, so as not to offend the Dead; and was mightily relieved when he recovered his elephant and allowed the guide to take him to Kumbha Rana's Tower of Victory.

This stands, like all things in Chitor, among ruins, but time and the other enemies have been good to it. It is a Jain edifice, nine storeys high, crowned atop — was this designed insult or undesigned repair? — with a purely Mahometan dome, where the pigeons and the bats live. Excepting this blemish, the Tower of Victory

is nearly as fair as when it left the hands of the builder whose name has not been handed down to us. It is to be observed here that the first, or more ruined, Tower of Victory, built in Alluji's days, when Chitor was comparatively young, was raised by some pious Jain as proof of conquest over things spiritual. The second tower is more worldly in intent.

Those who care to look, may find elsewhere a definition of its architecture and its more striking peculiarities. It was in kind, but not in degree, like the Jugdesh Temple at Udaipur, and, as it exceeded it in magnificence, so its effect upon the mind was more intense. The confusing intricacy of the figures with which it was wreathed from top to bottom, the recurrence of the one calm face, the God enthroned, holding the Wheel of the Law, and the appalling lavishness of decoration, all worked toward the instilment of fear and aversion.

Surely this must have been one of the objects of the architect. The tower, in the arrangement of its stairways, is like the interior of a Chinese carved ivory puzzle-ball. The idea given is that, even while you are ascending, you are wrapping yourself deeper and deeper in the tangle of a mighty maze. Add to this the half-light, the thronging armies of sculptured figures, the mad profusion of design splashed as impartially upon the undersides of the stone window-slabs as upon the door-beam of the threshold — add, most abhorrent of all, the slippery sliminess of the walls always worn smooth by naked men, and you will understand that the tower is not a soothing place to visit. The Englishman fancied presumptuously that he had, in a way, grasped the builder's idea; and when he came to the top storey and sat among

the pigeons his theory was this: To attain power, wrote the builder of old, in sentences of fine stone, it is necessary to pass through all sorts of close-packed horrors, treacheries, battles, and insults, in darkness and without knowledge whether the road leads upward or into a hopeless *cul-de-sac*. Kumbha Rana must many times have climbed to the top storey, and looked out toward the uplands of Malwa on the one side and his own great Mewar on the other, in the days when all the rock hummed with life and the clatter of hooves upon the stony ways, and Mahmoud of Malwa was safe in hold. How he must have swelled with pride — fine insolent pride of life and rule and power — power not only to break things but to compel such builders as those who piled the tower to his royal will! There was no decoration in the top storey to bewilder or amaze — nothing but well-grooved stone-slabs, and a boundless view fit for kings who traced their ancestry —

"From times when forth from the sunlight, the first of our Kings came down,
And had the earth for his footstool, and wore the stars for his crown."

The builder had left no mark behind him — not even a mark on the threshold of the door, or a sign in the head of the topmost step. The Englishman looked in both places, believing that those were the places generally chosen for mark-cutting. So he sat and meditated on the beauties of kingship and the unholiness of Hindu art, and what power a shadowland of lewd monstrosities had upon those who believed in it, and what Lord Dufferin, who is the nearest approach to a king in this India, must have thought when aide-de-camps clanked after

him up the narrow steps. But the day was wearing, and he came down — in both senses — and, in his descent, the carven things on every side of the tower, and above and below, once more took hold of and perverted his fancy, so that he arrived at the bottom in a frame of mind eminently fitted for a descent into the Gau-Mukh, which is nothing more terrible than a little spring, falling into a reservoir, in the side of the hill.

He stumbled across more ruins and passed between tombs of dead Ranis, till he came to a flight of steps, built out and cut out from rock, going down as far as he could see into a growth of trees on a terrace below him. The stone of the steps had been worn and polished by the terrible naked feet till it showed its markings clearly as agate; and where the steps ended in a rock-slope, there was a visible glair, a great snail-track, upon the rocks. It was hard to keep safe footing upon the sliminess. The air was thick with the sick smell of stale incense, and grains of rice were scattered upon the steps. But there was no one to be seen. Now this in itself was not specially alarming; but the Genius of the Place must be responsible for making it so. The Englishman slipped and bumped on the rocks, and arrived, more suddenly than he desired, upon the edge of a dull blue tank, sunk between walls of timeless masonry. In a slabbed-in recess, water was pouring through a shapeless stone gargoyle, into a trough; which trough again dripped into the tank. Almost under the little trickle of water, was the loathsome Emblem of Creation, and there were flowers and rice around it. Water was trickling from a score of places in the cut face of the hill; oozing between the edges of the steps and welling up between

the stone slabs of the terrace. Trees sprouted in the sides of the tank and hid its surroundings. It seemed as though the descent had led the Englishman, firstly, two thousand years away from his own century, and secondly, into a trap, and that he would fall off the polished stones into the stinking tank, or that the Gau-Mukh would continue to pour water until the tank rose up and swamped him, or that some of the stone slabs would fall forward and crush him flat.

Then he was conscious of remembering, with peculiar and unnecessary distinctness, that, from the Gau-Mukh, a passage led to the subterranean chambers in which the fair Pudmini and her handmaids had slain themselves. And, that Tod had written and the Station-master at Chitor had said, that some sort of devil, or ghoul, or Something, stood at the entrance of that approach. All of which was a nightmare bred in full day and folly to boot; but it was the fault of the Genius of the Place, who made the Englishman feel that he had done a great wrong in trespassing into the very heart and soul of all Chitor. And, behind him, the Gau-Mukh guggled and choked like a man in his death-throe. The Englishman endured as long as he could — about two minutes. Then it came upon him that he must go quickly out of this place of years and blood — must get back to the afternoon sunshine, and Gerowlia, and the dak-bungalow with the French bedstead. He desired no archæological information, he wished to take no notes, and, above all, he did not care to look behind him, where stood the reminder that he was no better than the beasts that perish. But he had to cross the smooth, worn rocks, and he felt their sliminess through his bootsoles. It

was as though he were treading on the soft, oiled skin of a Hindu. As soon as the steps gave refuge, he floundered up them, and so came out of the Gau-Mukh, bedewed with that perspiration which follows alike on honest toil or — childish fear.

"This," said he to himself, "is absurd!" and sat down on the fallen top of a temple to review the situation. But the Gau-Mukh had disappeared. He could see the dip in the ground and the beginning of the steps, but nothing more.

Perhaps it was absurd. It undoubtedly appeared so, later. Yet there was something uncanny about it all. It was not exactly a feeling of danger or pain, but an apprehension of great evil.

In defence, it may be urged that there is moral, just as much as there is mine, choke-damp. If you get into a place laden with the latter you die, and if into the home of the former you . . . behave unwisely, as constitution and temperament prompt. If any man doubt this, let him sit for two hours in a hot sun on an elephant, stay half an hour in the Tower of Victory, and then go down into the Gau-Mukh, which, it must never be forgotten, is merely a set of springs "three or four in number, issuing from the cliff face at cow-mouth carvings, now mutilated. The water, evidently percolating from the Hathi Kund above, falls first in an old pillared hall and thence into the masonry reservoir below, eventually, when abundant enough, supplying a little waterfall lower down." That, Gentlemen and Ladies, on the honour of one who has been frightened of the dark in broad daylight, is the Gau-Mukh, as though photographed.

The Englishman regained Gerowlia and demanded to be taken away, but Gerowlia's driver went forward instead and showed him a new Mahal just built by the present Maharana. Carriage drives, however, do not consort well with Chitor and the "shadow of her ancient beauty." The return journey, past temple after temple and palace upon palace, began in the failing light, and Gerowlia was still blundering up and down narrow by-paths — for she possessed all an old woman's delusion as to the slimness of her waist when the twilight fell, and the smoke from the town below began to creep up the brown flanks of Chitor, and the jackals howled. Then the sense of desolation, which had been strong enough in all conscience in the sunshine, began to grow and grow.

Near the Ram Pol there was some semblance of a town with living people in it, and a priest sat in the middle of the road and howled aloud upon his gods, until a little boy came and laughed in his face and he went away grumbling. This touch was deeply refreshing; in the contemplation of it, the Englishman clean forgot that he had overlooked the gathering in of materials for an elaborate statistical, historical, geographical account of Chitor. All that remained to him was a shuddering reminiscence of the Gau-Mukh and two lines of the "Holy Grail,"

> "And up into the sounding halls he passed,
> But nothing in the sounding halls he saw."

Post Scriptum. — There was something very uncanny about the Genius of the Place. He dragged an ease-loving egotist out of the French bedstead with the gilt knobs

at head and foot, into a more than usually big folly — nothing less than a seeing of Chitor by moonlight. There was no possibility of getting Gerowlia out of *her* bed, and a mistrust of the Maharana's soldiery who in the daytime guarded the gates, prompted the Englishman to avoid the public way, and scramble straight up the hillside, along an attempt at a path which he had noted from Gerowlia's back. There was no one to interfere, and nothing but an infinity of pestilent nullahs and loose stones to check. Owls came out and hooted at him, and animals ran about in the dark and made uncouth noises. It was an idiotic journey, and it ended — Oh, horror! in that unspeakable Gau-Mukh — this time entered from the opposite or brushwooded side, as far as could be made out in the dusk and from the chuckle of the water which, by night, was peculiarly malevolent.

Escaping from this place, crab-fashion, the Englishman crawled into Chitor and sat upon a flat tomb till the moon, a very inferior and second-hand one, rose, and turned the city of the dead into a city of scurrying ghouls — in sobriety, jackals. The ruins took strange shapes and shifted in the half light and cast objectionable shadows.

It was easy enough to fill the rock with the people of old times, and a very beautiful account of Chitor restored, made out by the help of Tod, and bristling with the names of the illustrious dead, would undoubtedly have been written, had not a woman, a living breathing woman, stolen out of a temple — what was she doing in that galley? — and screamed in piercing and public-spirited fashion. The Englishman got off the tomb and departed rather more noisily than a jackal; feeling for the moment that he was not much better. Somebody opened a

door with a crash, and a man cried out: "Who is there?" But the cause of the disturbance was, for his sins, being most horribly scratched by some thorny scrub over the edge of the hill — there are no bastions worth speaking of near the Gau-Mukh — and the rest was partly rolling, partly scrambling, and mainly bad language.

When you are too lucky sacrifice something, a beloved pipe for choice, to Ganesh. The Englishman has seen Chitor by moonlight — not the best moonlight truly, but the watery glare of a nearly spent moon — and his sacrifice to Luck is this. He will never try to describe what he has seen — but will keep it as a love-letter, a thing for one pair of eyes only — a memory that few men to-day can be sharers in. And does he, through this fiction, evade insulting, by pen and ink, a scene as lovely, wild, and unmatchable as any that mortal eyes have been privileged to rest upon?

An intelligent and discriminating public are perfectly at liberty to form their own opinions.

XII

CONTAINS THE HISTORY OF THE BHUMIA OF JHASWARA, AND THE RECORD OF A VISIT TO THE HOUSE OF STRANGE STORIES. DEMONSTRATES THE FELICITY OF LOAFERDOM, WHICH IS THE VERITABLE COMPANIONSHIP OF THE INDIAN EMPIRE, AND PROPOSES A SCHEME FOR THE BETTER OFFICERING OF TWO DEPARTMENTS.

Come away from the monstrous gloom of Chitor and escape northwards. The place is unclean and terrifying. Let us catch To-day by both hands and return to the Station-master who is also booking-parcels and telegraph-clerk, and who never seems to go to bed — and to the comfortably wadded bunks of the Rajputana-Malwa line.

While the train is running, be pleased to listen to the perfectly true story of the *bhumia* of Jhaswara, which is a story the sequel whereof has yet to be written. Once upon a time, a Rajput landholder, a *bhumia*, and a Mahometan *jaghirdar*, were next-door neighbours in Ajmir territory. They hated each other thoroughly for many reasons, all connected with land; and the *jaghirdar* was the bigger man of the two. In those days, it was the law that the victims of robbery or dacoity should be reimbursed by the owner of the lands on which the affair had taken place. The ordinance is now swept away as impracticable. There was a highway robbery on the *bhu-*

mia's holding; and he vowed that it had been "put up" by the Mahometan who, he said, was an Ahab. The reive-gelt payable nearly ruined the Rajput, and he, labouring under a galling grievance or a groundless suspicion, fired the *jaghirdar's* crops, was detected and brought up before the English Judge who gave him four years' imprisonment. To the sentence was appended a recommendation that, on release, the Rajput should be put on heavy securities for good behaviour. "Otherwise," wrote the Judge, who seems to have known the people he was dealing with, "he will certainly kill the *jaghirdar*." Four years passed, and the *jaghirdar* obtained wealth and consideration, and was made, let us say, a Khan Bahadur, and an Honorary Magistrate; but the *bhumia* remained in gaol and thought over the highway robbery. When the day of release came, a new Judge hunted up his predecessor's finding and recommendation, and would have put the *bhumia* on security. "Sahib," said the *bhumia*, "I have no people. I have been in gaol. What am I now? And who will find security for me? If you will send me back to gaol again I can do nothing, and I have no friends." So they released him, and he went away into an outlying village and borrowed a sword from one house, and had it sharpened in another, for love. Two days later fell the birthday of the Khan Bahadur and the Honorary Magistrate, and his friends and servants and dependants made a little levee and did him honour after the native custom. The *bhumia* also attended the levee, but no one knew him, and he was stopped at the door of the courtyard by the servant. "Say that the *bhumia* of Jhaswara has come to pay his salaams," said he. They let him in, and in the heart of Ajmir

City, in broad daylight, and before all the *jaghirdar's* household, he smote off his enemy's head so that it rolled upon the ground. Then he fled, and though they raised the countryside against him he was never caught, and went into Bikanir.

Five years later, word came to Ajmir that Chimbo Singh, the *bhumia* of Jhaswara, had taken service under the Thakur Sahib of Palitana. The case was an old one, and the chances of identification misty, but the suspected was caught and brought in, and one of the leading native barristers of the Bombay Bar was retained to defend him. He said nothing and continued to say nothing, and the case fell through. He is believed to be "wanted" now for a fresh murder committed within the last few months, out Bikanir way.

And now that the train has reached Ajmir, the Crewe of Rajputana, whither shall a tramp turn his feet? The Englishman set his stick on end, and it fell with its point Northwest as nearly as might be. This being translated, meant Jodhpur, which is the city of the Houyhnhnms. If you would enjoy Jodhpur thoroughly, quit at Ajmir the decent conventionalities of "station" life, and make it your business to move among gentlemen — gentlemen in the Ordnance or the Commissariat, or, better still, gentlemen on the Railway. At Ajmir, gentlemen will tell you what manner of place Jodhpur is, and their accounts, though flavoured with oaths, are amusing. In their eyes the desert that rings the city has no charms, and they discuss affairs of the State, as they understand them, in a manner that would curl the hair on a Political's august head. Jodhpur has been, but things are rather better now, a much-favoured camp-

ing ground for the light-cavalry of the Road — the loafers with a certain amount of brain and great assurance. The explanation is simple. There are more than four hundred horses in His Highness's city stables alone; and where the Houyhnhnm is, there also will be the Yahoo. This is sad but true.

Besides the Uhlans who come and go on Heaven knows what mysterious errands, there are bag-men travelling for the big English firms. Jodhpur is a good customer, and purchases all sorts of things, more or less useful, for the State or its friends. These are the gentlemen to know, if you would understand something of matters which are not written in reports.

The Englishman took a train from Ajmir to Marwar Junction, which is on the road to Mount Abu, westward from Ajmir, and at five in the morning, under pale moonlight, was uncarted at the beginning of the Jodhpur State Railway — one of the quaintest little lines that ever ran a locomotive. It is the Maharaja's very own, and pays about ten per cent; but its quaintness does not lie in these things. It is worked with rude economy, and started life by singularly and completely falsifying the Government estimates for its construction. An intelligent bureau asserted that it could not be laid down for less than — but the error shall be glossed over. It was laid down for a little more than seventeen thousand rupees a mile, with the help of second-hand rails and sleepers; and it is currently asserted that the Station-masters are flagmen, pointsmen, ticket-collectors, and everything else, except platforms, and lamp-rooms. As only two trains are run in the twenty-four hours, this economy of staff does not matter. The State line, with

the comparatively new branch to the Pachpadra salt-pits, pays handsomely and is exactly suited to the needs of its users. True, there is a certain haziness as to the hour of starting, but this allows laggards more time, and fills the packed carriages to overflowing.

From Marwar Junction to Jodhpur, the train leaves the Aravalis and goes northwards into the region of death that lies beyond the Luni River. Sand, *ak* bushes, and sand-hills, varied with occasional patches of unthrifty cultivation, make up the scenery. Rain has been very scarce in Marwar this year, and the country, consequently, shows at its worst, for almost every square mile of a kingdom nearly as large as Scotland is dependent on the sky for its crops. In a good season, a large village can pay from seven to nine thousand rupees revenue without blenching. In a bad one, "all the king's horses and all the king's men" may think themselves lucky if they raise fifteen rupees from the same place. The fluctuation is startling.

From a countryside, which to the uninitiated seems about as valuable as a stretch of West African beach, the State gets a revenue of nearly forty lakhs; and men who know the country vow that it has not been one tithe exploited, and that there is more to be made from salt marble and — curious thing in this wilderness — good forest conservancy, than an open-handed Durbar dreams of. An amiable weakness for unthinkingly giving away villages where ready cash failed, has somewhat hampered the revenue in past years; but now — and for this the Maharaja deserves great credit — Jodhpur has a large and genuine surplus and a very compact little scheme of railway extension. Before turning to a con-

sideration of the City of Jodhpur, hear a true story in connection with the Hyderabad-Pachpadra project which those interested in the scheme may lay to heart.

His State line, his "ownest own," as has been said, very much delighted the Maharaja who, in one or two points, is not unlike Sir Theodore Hope of sainted memory. Pleased with the toy, he said effusively, in words which may or may not have reached the ears of the Hyderabad-Pachpadra people: "This is a good business. If the Government will give me independent jurisdiction, I'll make and open the line straight away from Pachpadra to the end of my dominions, *i.e.*, all but to Hyderabad."

Then "up and spake an elder knight, sat at the King's right knee," who knew something about the railway map of India and the Controlling Power of strategical lines: "Maharaja Sahib — here is the Indus Valley State line and here is the Bombay-Baroda line. Where would *you* be?" "By Jove," quoth the Maharaja, though he swore by quite another god: "I see!" and thus he abandoned the idea of a Hyderabad line, and turned his attention to an extension to Nagore, with a branch to the Makrana marble quarries which are close to the Sambhar salt lake near Jeypore. And, in the fulness of time, that extension will be made and perhaps extended to Bahawalpur.

The Englishman came to Jodhpur at midday, in a hot, fierce sunshine that struck back from the sands and the ledges of red rock, as though it were May instead of December. The line scorned such a thing as a regular ordained terminus. The single track gradually melted away into the sands. Close to the station was a grim

stone dak-bungalow, and in the verandah stood a brisk, bag-and-flask-begirdled individual, cracking his joints with excess of irritation.

Nota Bene. — When one is on the Road it is above all things necessary to "pass the time o' day" to fellow-wanderers. Failure to comply with this law implies that the offender is "too good for his company"; and this, on the Road, is the unpardonable sin. The Englishman "passed the time o' day" in due and ample form. "Ha! Ha!" said the gentleman with the bag. "Isn't this a sweet place? There ain't no *ticca-gharies*, and there ain't nothing to eat, if you haven't brought your vittles, an' they charge you three-eight for a bottle of whisky. Oh! it's a sweet place." Here he skipped about the verandah and puffed. Then turning upon the Englishman, he said fiercely: "What have you come here for?" Now this was rude, because the ordinary form of salutation on the Road is usually, "And what are you for?" meaning "what house do you represent?" The Englishman answered dolefully that he was travelling for pleasure, which simple explanation offended the little man with the courier-bag. He snapped his joints more excruciatingly than ever: "For pleasure? My God! For pleasure? Come here an' wait five weeks for your money, an', mark what I'm tellin' you now, you don't get it then! But per'aps your ideas of pleasure is different from most people's. For pleasure! Yah!" He skipped across the sands toward the station, for he was going back with the down train, and vanished in a whirlwind of luggage and the fluttering of female skirts: in Jodhpur the women are baggage coolies. A level, drawling voice spoke from an inner

room: "'E's a bit upset. That's what 'e is! I remember when I was at Gworlior" — the rest of the story was lost, and the Englishman set to work to discover the nakedness of the dak-bungalow. For reasons which do not concern the public, it is made as bitterly uncomfortable as possible. The food is infamous, and the charges seem to be wilfully pitched about eighty per cent above the tariff, so that some portion of the bill, at least, may be paid without bloodshed, or the unseemly defilement of walls with the contents of drinking glasses. This is short-sighted policy, and it would, perhaps, be better to lower the prices and hide the tariff, and put a guard about the house to prevent jackal-molested donkeys from stampeding into the verandahs. But these be details. Jodhpur dak-bungalow is a merry, merry place, and any writer in search of new ground to locate a madly improbable story in, could not do better than study it diligently. In front lies sand, riddled with innumerable ant-holes, and beyond the sand the red sandstone wall of the city, and the Mahometan burying-ground that fringes it. Fragments of sandstone set on end mark the resting places of the Faithful, who are of no great account here. Above everything, a mark for miles around, towers the dun-red pile of the Fort which is also a Palace. This is set upon sandstone rock whose sharper features have been worn smooth by the wash of the windblown sand. It is as monstrous as anything in Dore's illustrations of the *Contes Drolatiques* and, wherever it wanders, the eye comes back at last to its fantastic bulk. There is no greenery on the rock, nothing but fierce sunlight or black shadow. A line of red hills forms the background of the city, and this is as bare as

the picked bones of camels that lie bleaching on the sand below.

Wherever the eye falls, it sees a camel or a string of camels — lean, racer-built *sowarri* camels, or heavy, black, shag-haired trading ships bent on their way to the Railway Station. Through the night the air is alive with the bubbling and howling of the brutes, who assuredly must suffer from nightmare. In the morning the chorus round the station is deafening.

Knowing what these camels meant, but trusting nevertheless that the road would not be *very* bad, the Englishman went into the city, left a well-kunkered road, turned through a sand-worn, red sandstone gate, and sank ankle-deep in fine reddish white sand. This was the main thoroughfare of the city. Two tame lynxes shared it with a donkey; and the rest of the population seemed to have gone to bed. In the hot weather, between ten in the morning and four in the afternoon all Jodhpur stays at home for fear of death by sun-stroke, and it is possible that the habit extends far into what is officially called the "cold weather"; or, perhaps, being brought up among sands, men do not care to tramp them for pleasure. The city internally is a walled and secret place; each courtyard being hidden from view by a red sandstone wall except in a few streets where the shops are poor and mean.

In an old house now used for the storing of tents, Akbar's mother lay two months, before the "Guardian of Mankind" was born, drawing breath for her flight to Umarkot across the desert. Seeing this place, the Englishman thought of many things not worth the putting down on paper, and went on till the sand grew

deeper and deeper, and a great camel, heavily laden with stone, came round a corner and nearly stepped on him. As the evening fell, the city woke up, and the goats and the camels and the kine came in by hundreds, and men said that wild pig, which are strictly preserved by the Princes for their own sport, were in the habit of wandering about the roads. Now if they do this in the capital, what damage must they not do to the crops in the district? Men said that they did a very great deal of damage, and it was hard to keep their noses out of anything they took a fancy to. On the evening of the Englishman's visit, the Maharaja went out, as is his laudable custom, alone and unattended, to a road actually *in* the city along which one specially big pig was in the habit of passing. His Highness got his game with a single shot behind the shoulder, and in a few days it was pickled and sent off to the Maharana of Udaipur, as a love-gift. There is great friendship between Jodhpur and Udaipur, and the idea of one King going abroad to shoot game for another has something very pretty and quaint in it.

Night fell and the Englishman became aware that the conservancy of Jodhpur might be vastly improved. Strong stenches, say the doctors, are of no importance; but there came upon every breath of heated air — and in Jodhpur City the air is warm in mid-winter — the faint, sweet, sickly reek that one has always been taught to consider specially deadly. A few months ago there was an impressive outbreak of cholera in Jodhpur, and the Residency Doctor, who really hoped that the people would be brought to see sense, did his best to bring forward a general cleansing-scheme. But the city fathers

would have none of it. Their fathers had been trying to poison themselves in well-defined ways for an indefinite number of years; and they were not going to have any of the Sahib's "sweeper-nonsense."

To clinch everything, one travelled member of the community rose in his place and said: "Why, I've been to Simla. Yes, to Simla! And even *I* don't want it!"

When the black dusk had shut down, the Englishman climbed up a little hill and saw the stars come out and shine over the desert. Very far away, some camel-drivers had lighted a fire and were singing as they sat by the side of their beasts. Sound travels as far over sand as over water, and their voices came into the city wall and beat against it in multiplied echoes.

Then he returned to the House of Strange Stories — the Dak-bungalow — and passed the time o' day with a light-hearted bagman — a Cockney, in whose heart there was no thought of India, though he had travelled for years throughout the length and breadth of the Empire and over New Burma as well. There was a fort in Jodhpur, but you see that was not in his line of business exactly, and there were stables, but "you may take my word for it, them who has much to do with horses is a bad lot. You get hold of the Maharaja's coachman and he'll drive you all round the shop. I'm only waiting here collecting money." Jodhpur dak-bungalow seems to be full of men "waiting here." They lie in long chairs in the verandah and tell each other interminable stories, or stare citywards and express their opinion of some dilatory debtor. They are all waiting for something; and they vary the monotony of a life they make wilfully dull beyond words, by waging war

with the dak-bungalow khaṇsama. Then they return to their long chairs or their couches, and sleep. Some of them, in old days, used to wait as long as six weeks — six weeks in May, when the sixty miles from Marwar Junction to Jodhpur was covered in three days by slow-pacing bullock carts! Some of them are bagmen, able to describe the demerits of every dak-bungalow from the Peshin to Pagan, and southward to Hyderabad — men of substance who have "The Trades" at their back. It is a terrible thing to be in "The Trades," that great Doomsday Book of Calcutta, in whose pages are written the names of doubtful clients. Let light-hearted purchasers take note.

And the others, who wait and swear and spit and exchange anecdotes — what are they? Bummers, landsharks, skirmishers for their bread. It would be cruel in a fellow-tramp to call them loafers. Their lien upon the State may have its origin in horses, or anything else; for the State buys anything vendible, from Abdul Rahman's most promising importations to a patent, self-acting corkscrew. They are a mixed crew, but amusing and full of strange stories of adventure by land and sea. And their ends are as curiously brutal as their lives. A wanderer was once swept into the great, still backwater that divides the loaferdom of Upper India — that is to say, Calcutta and Bombay — from the north-going current of Madras, where Nym and Pistol are highly finished articles with certificates of education. This backwater is a dangerous place to break down in, as the men on the Road know well. "You can run Rajputana in a pair o' sack breeches an' an old hat, but go to Central Injia with money," says the wisdom of the Road. So the waif

died in the bazaar, and the Barrack-master Sahib gave orders for his burial. It might have been the bazaar sergeant, or it might have been an hireling who was charged with the disposal of the body. At any rate, it was an Irishman who said to the Barrack-master Sahib: "Fwhat about that loafer?" "Well, what's the matter?" "I'm considtherin whether I'm to mash in his thick head, or to break his long legs. He won't fit the store-coffin anyways."

Here the story ends. It may be an old one; but it struck the Englishman as being rather unsympathetic in its nature; and he has preserved it for this reason. Were the Englishman a mere Secretary of State instead of an enviable and unshackled vagabond, he would remodel that Philanthropic Institution of Teaching Young Subalterns how to Spell — variously called the Intelligence and the Political Department — and giving each boy the pair of sack breeches and old hat, above prescribed, would send him out for a twelvemonth on the Road. Not that he might learn to swear Australian oaths (which are superior to any ones in the market) or to drink bazaar-drinks (which are very bad indeed), but in order that he might gain an insight into the tertiary politics of States — things less imposing than succession-cases and less wearisome than boundary disputes, but very well worth knowing.

A small volume might be written of the ways and the tales of Indian loafers of the more brilliant order — such Chevaliers of the Order of Industry as would throw their glasses in your face did you call them loafers. They are a genial, blasphemous, blustering crew, and preëminent even in a land of liars.

XIII

A KING'S HOUSE AND COUNTRY. FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THE HAT-MARKED CASTE.

THE hospitality that spreads tables in the wilderness, and shifts the stranger from the back of the hired camel into a two-horse victoria, must be experienced to be appreciated.

To those unacquainted with the peculiarities of the native-trained horse, this advice may be worth something. Sit as far back as ever you can, and, if Oriental courtesy have put an English bit and bridoon in a mouth by education intended for a spiked curb, leave the whole contraption alone. Once acquainted with the comparative smoothness of English iron-mongery, your mount will grow frivolous. In which event a four-pound steeplechase saddle, accepted through sheer shame, offers the very smallest amount of purchase to untrained legs.

The Englishman rode up to the Fort, and by the way learnt all these things and many more. He was provided with a racking, female horse who swept the gullies of the city by dancing sideways.

The road to the Fort, which stands on the Hill of Strife, wound in and out of sixty-foot hills, with a skilful avoidance of all shade; and this was at high noon, when puffs of heated air blew from the rocks on all sides. "What must the heat be in May?" The Englishman's

companion was a cheery Brahmin, who wore the lightest of turbans and sat the smallest of neat little country-breds. "Awful!" said the Brahmin. "But not so bad as in the district. Look there!" and he pointed from the brow of a bad eminence, across the quivering heat-haze, to where the white sand faded into bleach blue sky and the horizon was shaken and tremulous. "It's very bad in summer. Would knock you — oh yes — all to smash, but *we* are accustomed to it." A rock-strewn hill, about half a mile, as the crow flies, from the Fort was pointed out as the place whence, at the beginning of this century, the Pretender Sowae besieged Raja Maun for five months, but could make no headway against his foe. One gun of the enemy's batteries specially galled the Fort, and the Jodhpur King offered a village to any of his gunners who should dismount it. "It was smashed," said the Brahmin. "Oh yes, all to pieces." Practically, the city which lies below the Fort is indefensible, and during the many wars of Marwar has generally been taken up by the assailants without resistance.

Entering the Fort by the Jeypore Gate, and studiously refraining from opening his umbrella, the Englishman found shadow and coolth, took off his hat to the tun-bellied, trunk-nosed God of Good-Luck who had been very kind to him in his wanderings, and sat down near half a dozen of the Maharaja's guns bearing the mark, "A. Broome, Cossipore, 1857," or "G. Hutchinson, Cossipore, 1838." Now rock and masonry are so curiously blended in this great pile that he who walks through it loses sense of being among buildings. It is as though he walked through mountain-gorges. The stone-paved, inclined planes, and the tunnel-like passages driven

under a hundred feet height of buildings, increase this impression. In many places the wall and rock runs up unbroken by any window for forty feet.

It would be a week's work to pick out even roughly the names of the dead who have added to the buildings, or to describe the bewildering multiplicity of courts and ranges of rooms; and, in the end, the result would be as satisfactory as an attempt to describe a nightmare. It is said that the rock on which the Fort stands is four miles in circuit, but no man yet has dared to estimate the size of the city that they call the Palace, or the mileage of its ways. Ever since Ras Joda, four hundred years ago, listened to the voice of a *Jogi*, and leaving Mundore built his eyrie on the "Bird's nest" as the Hill of Strife was called, the Palaces have grown and thickened. Even to-day the builders are still at work. Takht Singh, the present ruler's predecessor, built royally. An incomplete bastion and a Hall of Flowers are among the works of his pleasure. Hidden away behind a mighty wing of carved red sandstone lie rooms set apart for Viceroys, Durbar Halls and dinner-rooms without end. A gentle gloom covers the evidences of the catholic taste of the State in articles of "bigotry and virtue"; but there is enough light to show the *raison d'être* of the men who wait in the dak-bungalow. And, after all, what is the use of Royalty in these days if a man may not take delight in the pride of the eye? Kumbha Rana, the great man of Chitor, fought like a Rajput, but he had an instinct which made him build the Tower of Victory at, who knows what cost of money and life. The fighting-instinct thrown back upon itself must have some sort of outlet; and a merciful Providence wisely ordains that

the Kings of the East in the nineteenth century shall take pleasure in shopping on an imperial scale. Dresden China snuff-boxes, mechanical engines, electro-plated fish-slicers, musical boxes, and gilt blown-glass Christmas-tree balls do not go well with the splendours of a Palace that might have been built by Titans and coloured by the morning sun. But there are excuses to be made for Kings who have no fighting to do.

In one of the higher bastions stands a curious specimen of one of the earliest *mitrailleuses* — a cumbrous machine carrying twenty gun-barrels in two rows, which small-arm fire is flanked by two tiny cannon. As a muzzle-loading implement its value after the first discharge would be insignificant; but the soldiers lounging by assured the Englishman that it had done good service in its time.

A man may spend a long hour in the upper tiers of the Palaces, but still far from the roof-tops, in looking out across the desert. There are Englishmen in these wastes, who say gravely that there is nothing so fascinating as the sand of Bikanir and Marwar. "You see," explained an enthusiast of the Hat-marked Caste, "you are not shut in by roads, and you can go just as you please. And, somehow, it grows upon you as you get used to it, and you end, y' know, by falling in love with the place." Look steadily from the Palace westward where the city with its tanks and serais is spread at your feet, and you will, in a lame way, begin to understand the fascination of the Desert which, by those who have felt it, is said to be even stronger than the fascination of the Road. The city is of red sandstone and dull and sombre to look at. Beyond it, where the white

sand lies, the country is dotted with camels limping into the Eiwigkeit or coming from the same place. Trees appear to be strictly confined to the suburbs of the city. Very good. If you look long enough across the sands, while a voice in your ear is telling you of half-buried cities, old as old Time, and wholly unvisited by Sahibs, of districts where the white man is unknown, and of the wonders of far-away Jeysulmir ruled by a half-distraught king, sand-locked and now smitten by a terrible food and water famine, you will, if it happen that you are of a sedentary and civilised nature, experience a new emotion — will be conscious of a great desire to take one of the lobbing camels and get away into the desert, away from the last touch of To-day, to meet the Past face to face. Some day a novelist will exploit the unknown land from the Rann, where the wild ass breeds, northward and eastward, till he comes to the Indus.

But the officials of Marwar do not call their country a desert. On the contrary, they administer it very scientifically and raise, as has been said, about thirty-eight lakhs from it. To come back from the influence and the possible use of the desert to more prosaic facts. Read quickly a rough record of things in modern Marwar. The old is drawn in Tod, who speaks the truth. The Maharaja's right hand in the work of the State is Maharaj Sir Pertab Singh, Prime Minister A. — D. — C. to the Prince of Wales, capable of managing the Marwari who intrigues like a — Marwari, equally capable, as has been seen, of moving in London Society, and Colonel of a newly raised crack cavalry corps. The Englishman would have liked to have seen him, but he was away in the desert somewhere, either marking

a boundary or looking after a succession case. Not very long ago, as the Setts of Ajmir knew well, there was a State debt of fifty lakhs. This has now been changed into a surplus of three lakhs, and the revenue is growing. Also, the simple Dacoit who used to enjoy himself very pleasantly, has been put into a department, and the Thug with him.

Consequently, for the department takes a genuine interest in this form of *shikar*, and the gaol leg-irons are not too light, dacoities have been reduced to such an extent that men say "you may send a woman, with her ornaments upon her, from Sojat to Phalodi, and she will not lose a nose-ring. Again, and this in a Rajput State is an important matter, the boundaries of nearly every village in Marwar have been demarcated, and boundary fights, in which both sides preferred small-arm fire to the regulation club, are unknown. The open-handed system of giving away villages had raised a large and unmannerly crop of *jaghirdars*. These have been taken up and brought in hand by Sir Pertab Singh, to the better order of the State.

A Punjabi Sirdar, Har Dyal Singh, has reformed, or made rather, Courts on the Civil and Criminal Side; and his hand is said to be found in a good many sweepings out of old corners. It must always be borne in mind that everything that has been done, was carried through over and under unlimited intrigue, for Jodhpur is a Native State. Intrigue must be met with intrigue by all except Gordons or demi-gods; and it is curious to hear how a reduction in tariff, or a smoothing out of some tangled Court, had to be worked by shift and by-way. The tales are comic, but not for publication.

Howbeit, Har Dyal Singh got his training in part under the Punjab Government, and in part in a little Native State far away in the Himalayas, where intrigue is not altogether unknown. To the credit of the "Pauper Province" be it said, it is not easy to circumvent a Punjabi. The details of his work would be dry reading. The result of it is good, and there is justice in Marwar, and order and firmness in its administration.

Naturally, the land-revenue is the most interesting thing in Marwar from an administrative point of view. The basis of it is a tank about the size of a swimming-bath, with a catchment of several hundred square yards, draining through leeped channels. When God sends the rain, the people of the village drink from the tank. When the rains fail, as they failed this year, they take to their wells, which are brackish and breed guinea-worm. For these reasons the revenue, like the Republic of San Domingo, is never alike for two years running. There are no canal questions to harry the authorities; but the fluctuations are enormous. Under the Aravalis the soil is good: further north they grow millet and pasture cattle, though, said a Revenue Officer cheerfully, "God knows what the brutes find to eat." *Apropos* of irrigation, the one canal deserves special mention, as showing how George Stephenson came to Jodhpur and astonished the inhabitants. Six miles from the city proper lies the Balsaman Sagar, a great tank. In the hot weather, when the city tanks ran out or stank, it was the pleasant duty of the women to tramp twelve miles at the end of the day's work to fill their lotahs. In the hot weather Jodhpur is — let a simile suffice. Sukkur in June would be Simla to Jodhpur.

The State Engineer, who is also the Jodhpur State Line, for he has no European subordinates, conceived the idea of bringing the water from the Balsaman into the city. Was the city grateful? Not in the least. It is said that the Sahib wanted the water to run uphill and was throwing money into the tank. Being true Marwaris, men betted on the subject. The canal — a built out one, for water must not touch earth in these parts — was made at a cost of something over a lakh, and the water came down because its source was a trifle higher than the city. Now, in the hot weather, the women need not go for long walks, but the Marwari cannot understand how it was that the waters came down to Jodhpur. From the Marwari to money matters is an easy step. Formerly, that is to say, up to within a very short time, the Treasury of Jodhpur was conducted in a shiftless, happy-go-lucky sort of fashion, not uncommon in Native States, whereby the Mahajuns "held the bag" and made unholy profits on discount and other things, to the confusion of the Durbar Funds and their own enrichment. There is now a Treasury modelled on English lines, and English in the important particular that money is not to be got from it for the asking, and the items of expenditure are strictly looked after.

In the middle of all this bustle of reform planned, achieved, frustrated, and replanned, and the never-ending underground warfare that surges in a Native State, move the English officers — the irreducible minimum of exiles. As a caste, the working Englishmen in Native States are curiously interesting; and the traveller whose tact by this time has been blunted by tramping, sits in judgment upon them as he has seen them. In the first

place, they are, they must be, the fittest who have survived; for though, here and there, you shall find one chafing bitterly against the burden of his life in the wilderness, one to be pitied more than any chained beast, the bulk of the caste are honestly and unaffectedly fond of their work, fond of the country around them, and fond of the people they deal with. In each State their answer to a question is the same. The men with whom they are in contact are "all right" when you know them, but you've got to "know them first," as the music-hall song says. Their hands are full of work; so full that, when the incult wanderer said: "What do you find to do?" they look upon him with contempt and amazement, exactly as the wanderer himself had once looked upon a Globe-trotter, who had put to him the same impertinent query. And — but here the Englishman may be wrong — it seemed to him that in one respect their lives were a good deal more restful and concentrated than those of their brethren under the British Government. There was no talk of shiftings and transfers and promotions, stretching across a Province and a half, and no man said anything about Simla. To one who has hitherto believed that Simla is the hub of the Empire, it is disconcerting to hear: "Oh, Simla! That's where you Bengalis go. We haven't anything to do with Simla down here." And no more they have. Their talk and their interests run in the boundaries of the States they serve, and, most striking of all, the gossipy element seems to be cut altogether. It is a backwater of the river of Anglo-Indian life — or is it the main current, the broad stream that supplies the motive power, and is the other life only the noisy ripple on the surface? You

who have lived, not merely looked at, both lives, decide. Much can be learnt from the talk of the caste, many curious, many amusing, and some startling things. One hears stories of men who take a poor, impoverished State as a man takes a wife, "for better or worse," and, moved by some incomprehensible ideal of virtue, consecrate — that is not too big a word — consecrate their lives to that State in all single-heartedness and purity. Such men are few, but they exist to-day, and their names are great in lands where no Englishman travels. Again the listener hears tales of grizzled diplomats of Rajputana — Machiavellis who have hoisted a powerful intriguer with his own intrigue, and bested priestly cunning, and the guile of the Oswal, simply that the way might be clear for some scheme which should put money into a tottering Treasury, or lighten the taxation of a few hundred thousand men — or both; for this can be done. One tithe of that force spent on their own personal advancement would have carried such men very far.

Truly the Hat-marked Caste are a strange people. They are so few and so lonely and so strong. They can sit down in one place for years, and see the works of their hands and the promptings of their brain grow to actual and beneficent life, bringing good to thousands. Less fettered than the direct servant of the Indian Government, and working over a much vaster charge, they seem a bigger and a more large-minded breed. And that is saying a good deal.

But let the others, the little people bound down and supervised, and strictly limited and income-taxed, always remember that the Hat-marked are very badly off for shops. If they want a neck-tie they must get it up from

Bombay, and in the Rains they can hardly move about; and they have no amusements and must go a day's railway journey for a rubber, and their drinking-water is doubtful: and there is less than one white woman *per* ten thousand square miles.

After all, comparative civilisation has its advantages.

XIV

AMONG THE HOUYHNHNMS.

Jodhpur differs from the other States of Rajputana in that its Royalty are peculiarly accessible to an inquiring public. There are wanderers, the desire of whose life it is "to see Nabobs," which is the Globe-trotter's title for any one in unusually clean clothes, or an Oudh Taluqdar in gala dress. Men asked in Jodhpur whether the Englishman would like to see His Highness. The Englishman had a great desire to do so, if His Highness would be in no way inconvenienced. Then they scoffed: "Oh, he won't *durbar* you, you needn't flatter yourself. If he's in the humour he'll receive you like an English country-gentleman." How in the world could the owner of such a place as Jodhpur Palace be in any way like an English country-gentleman? The Englishman had not long to wait in doubt. His Highness intimated his readiness to see the Englishman between eight and nine in the morning at the Raika-Bagh. The Raika-Bagh is not a Palace, for the lower storey and all the detached buildings round it are filled with horses. Nor can it in any way be called a stable, because the upper storey contains sumptuous apartments full of all manner of valuables both of the East and the West. Nor is it in any sense a pleasure-garden, for it stands on soft white sand, close to a multitude of litter and sand training tracks, and is

devoid of trees for the most part. Therefore the Raika-Bagh is simply the Raika-Bagh and nothing else. It is now the chosen residence of the Maharaja who loves to live among his four hundred or more horses. All Jodhpur is horse-mad by the way, and it behoves any one who wishes to be any one to keep his own race-course. The Englishman went to the Raika-Bagh, which stands half a mile or so from the city, and passing through a long room filled with saddles by the dozen, bridles by the score, and bits by the hundred, was aware of a very small and lively little cherub on the roof of a garden-house. He was carefully muffled, for the morning was chill. "Good morning," he cried cheerfully in English, waving a mittened hand. "Are you going to see my faver and the horses?" It was the Maharaja Kanwar, the Crown Prince, the apple of the Maharaja's eye, and one of the quaintest little bodies that ever set an Englishman disrespectfully laughing. He studies English daily with one of the English officials of the State, and stands a very good chance of being thoroughly spoiled, for he is a general pet. As befits his dignity, he has his own carriage or carriages, his own twelve-hand stable, his own house and retinue.

A few steps further on, in a little enclosure in front of a small two-storied white bungalow, sat His Highness the Maharaja, deep in discussion with the State Engineer. He wore an English ulster, and within ten paces of him was the first of a long range of stalls. There was an informality of procedure about Jodhpur which, after the strained etiquette of other States, was very refreshing. The State Engineer, who has a growing line to attend to, cantered away and His Highness after a few introductory

words, knowing what the Englishman would be after, said: "Come along, and look at the horses." Other formality there was absolutely none. Even the indispensable knot of hangers-on stood at a distance, and behind a paling, in this most rustic country residence. A well-bred fox-terrier took command of the proceedings, after the manner of dogs the world over, and the Maharaja led to the horse-boxes. But a man turned up, bending under the weight of much bacon. "Oh! here's the pig I shot for Udaipur last night. You see that is the best piece. It's pickled, and that's what makes it yellow to look at." He patted the great side that was held up. "There will be a camel sowar to meet it half way to Udaipur; and I hope Udaipur will be pleased with it. It was a very big pig." "And where did you shoot it, Maharaja Sahib?" "Here," said His Highness, smiting himself high up under the armpit. "Where else would you have it?" Certainly this descendant of Raja Maun was more like an English country-gentleman than the Englishman in his ignorance had deemed possible. He led on from horse-box to horse-box, the terrier at his heels, pointing out each horse of note; and Jodhpur has many. "There's *Raja*, twice winner of the Civil Service Cup." The Englishman looked reverently and *Raja* rewarded his curiosity with a vicious snap, for he was being dressed over, and his temper was out of joint. Close to him stood *Autocrat*, the grey with the nutmeg marks on the off-shoulder, a picture of a horse, also disturbed in his mind. Next to him was a chestnut Arab, a hopeless cripple, for one of his knees had been smashed and the leg was doubled up under him. It was *Turquoise*, who, six or eight years ago, rewarded good feeding by

getting away from his groom, falling down and ruining himself, but who, none the less, has lived an honoured pensioner on the Maharaja's bounty ever since. No horses are shot in the Jodhpur stables, and when one dies — they have lost not more than twenty-five in six years — his funeral is an event. He is wrapped in a white sheet which is strewn with flowers, and, amid the weeping of the *saises*, is borne away to the burial ground.

After doing the honours for nearly half an hour the Maharaja departed, and as the Englishman has not seen more than forty horses, he felt justified in demanding more. And he got them. *Eclipse* and *Young Revenge* were out down-country, but *Sherwood* at the stud, *Shere Ali*, *Conqueror*, *Tynedale*, *Sherwood II*, a maiden of Abdul Rahman's, and many others of note, were in, and were brought out. Among the veterans, a wrathful, rampant, red horse still, came *Brian Boru*, whose name has been written large in the chronicles of the Indian turf, jerking his *sais* across the road. His near-fore is altogether gone, but as a pensioner he condescends to go in harness, and is then said to be a "handful." He certainly looks it.

At the two hundred and fifty-seventh horse, and perhaps the twentieth block of stables, the Englishman's brain began to reel, and he demanded rest and information on a certain point. He had gone into some fifty stalls, and looked into all the rest, and in the looking had searchingly sniffed. But, as truly as he was then standing far below *Brian Boru's* bony withers, never the ghost of a stench had polluted the keen morning air. The City of the Houyhnhnms was specklessly clean — cleaner than any stable, racing or private, that he had

been into. How was it done? The pure white sand accounted for a good deal, and the rest was explained by one of the Masters of Horse: "Each horse has one *sais* at least — old *Ringwood* has four — and we make 'em work. If we didn't, we'd be mucked up to the horses' bellies in no time. Everything is cleaned off at once; and whenever the sand's tainted it's renewed. There's quite enough sand you see hereabouts. Of course we can't keep their coats so good as in other stables, by reason of the rolling; but we can keep 'em pretty clean."

To the eye of one who knew less than nothing about horse-flesh, this immaculate purity was very striking, and quite as impressive was the condition of the horses, which was English — quite English. Naturally, none of them were in any sort of training beyond daily exercise, but they were fit and in such thoroughly good fettle. Many of them were out on the various tracks, and many were coming in. Roughly, two hundred go out of a morning, and, it is to be feared, learn from the heavy going of the Jodhpur courses how to hang in their stride. This is a matter for those who know, but it struck the Englishman that a good deal of the unsatisfactory performances of the Jodhpur stables might be accounted for by their having lost their clean stride on the sand, and having to pick it up gradually on the less holding down-country courses — unfortunately when they were *not* doing training gallops, but the real thing.

It was pleasant to sit down and watch the rush of the horses through the great opening — gates are not affected — going on to the countryside where they take the air. Here a boisterous, unschooled Arab shot out across the road and cried, "Ha! Ha!" in the scriptural manner,

before trying to rid himself of the grinning black imp on his back. Behind him a Cabuli — surely all Cabulis must have been born with Pelhams in their mouths — bored sulkily across the road, or threw himself across the path of a tall, mild-eyed Kurnal-bred youngster, whose cocked ears and swinging head showed that, though he was so sedate, he was thoroughly taking in his surroundings, and would very much like to know if there were anybody better than himself on the course that morning. Impetuous as a schoolboy and irresponsible as a monkey, one of the Prince's polo ponies, not above racing in his own set, would answer the question by rioting past the pupil of Parrott, the monogram on his bodycloth flapping free in the wind, and his head and hogged tail in the elements. The youngster would swing himself round, and polka-mazurka for a few paces, till his attention would be caught by some dainty Child of the Desert, fresh from the Bombay stables, sweating at every sound, backing and filling like a rudderless ship. Then, thanking his stars that he was wiser than some people, Number 177 would lob on to the track and settle down to his spin like the gentleman he was. Elsewhere, the eye fell upon a cloud of nameless ones, purchases from Abdul Rahman, whose worth will be proved next hot weather, when they are seriously taken in hand — skirmishing over the face of the land and enjoying themselves immensely. High above everything else, like a collier among barges, screaming shrilly, a black, flamboyant Marwari stallion, with a crest like the crest of a barb, barrel-bellied, goose-rumped, and river-maned, pranced through the press, while the slow-pacing waler carriage-horses eyed him with deep disfavour, and the

Maharaja Kanwar's tiny mount capered under his pink, Roman nose, kicking up as much dust as the *Foxhall* colt who had got on to a lovely patch of sand and was dancing a saraband in it. In and out of the tangle, going down to or coming back from the courses, ran, shuffled, rocketed, plunged, sulked, or stampeded countless horses of all kinds, shapes, and descriptions — so that the eye at last failed to see what they were, and only retained a general impression of a whirl of bays, greys, iron greys, and chestnuts with white stockings, some as good as could be desired, others average, but not one distinctly bad.

"We have no downright bad 'uns in this stable. What's the use?" said the Master of Horse, calmly. "They are all good beasts and, one with another, must cost more than a thousand rupees each. This year's new ones bought from Bombay and the pick of our own studs are a hundred strong about. May be more. Yes, they look all right enough; but you can never know what they are going to turn out. Live-stock is very uncertain." "And how are the stables managed? how do you make room for the fresh stock?" Something this way. Here are all the new ones and Parrott's lot, and the English colts that Maharaja Pertab Singh brought out with him from Home. *Winterlake* out o' *Queen's Consort* that chestnut is with the two white stockings you're looking at now. Well, next hot weather we shall see what they're made of and which is who. There's so many that the trainer hardly knows 'em one from another till they begin to be a good deal forward. Those that haven't got the pace, or that the Maharaja don't fancy, they're taken out and sold for

what they'll bring. The man who takes the horses out has a good job of it. He comes back and says: "I sold such and such for so much, and here's the money." That's all. Well, our rejections are worth having. They have taken prizes at the Poona Horse Show. See for yourself. Is there one of those that you wouldn't be glad to take for a hack, and look well after too? Only they're no use to us, and so out they go by the score. We've got sixty riding-boys, perhaps more, and they've got their work cut out to keep them all going. What you've seen are only the stables. We've got one stud at Bellara, eighty miles out, and they come in sometimes in droves of three and four hundred from the stud. They raise Marwaris there too, but that's entirely under native management. We've got nothing to do with that. The natives reckon a Marwari the best country-bred you can lay hands on; and some of them are beauties! Crests on 'em like the top of a wave. Well, there's that stud and another stud and, reckoning one with another, I should say the Maharaja has nearer twelve hundred than a thousand horses of his own. For this place here, two wagon-loads of grass come in every day from Marwar Junction. Lord knows how many saddles and bridles we've got. I never counted. I suppose we've about forty carriages, not counting the ones that get shabby and are stacked in places in the city, as I suppose you've seen. We take 'em out in the morning, a regular string altogether, brakes and all; but the prettiest turn-out we ever turned out was Lady Dufferin's pony four-in-hand. Walers — thirteen-two the wheelers, I think, and thirteen-one the leaders. They took prizes in Poona. That *was* a pretty turn-out. The prettiest in

India. Lady Dufferin, she drove it when the Viceroy was down here last year. There are bicycles and tricycles in the carriage department too. I don't know how many, but when the Viceroy's camp was held, there was about one apiece for the gentlemen, with remounts. They're somewhere about the place now, if you want to see them. How do we manage to keep the horses so quiet? You'll find some o' the youngsters play the goat a good deal when they come out o' stable, but, as you say, there's no vice generally. It's this way. We don't allow any curry-combs. If we did, the *saises* would be wearing out their brushes on the combs. It's all elbow-grease here. They've got to go over the horses with their hands. They must handle 'em, and a native he's afraid of a horse. Now an English groom, when a horse is doing the fool, clips him over the head with a curry-comb, or punches him in the belly; and that hurts the horse's feelings. A native, he just stands back till the trouble is over. He *must* handle the horse or he'd get into trouble for not dressing him, so it comes to all handling and no licking, and that's why you won't get hold of a really vicious brute in these stables. Old *Ringwood* he had four *saises*, and he wanted 'em every one, but the other horses have no more than one *sais* apiece. The Maharaja he keeps fourteen or fifteen horses for his own riding. Not that he cares to ride now, but he likes to have his horses; and no one else can touch 'em. Then there's the horses that he mounts his visitors on, when they come for pig-sticking and such like, and then there's a lot of horses that go to Maharaja Pertab Singh's new cavalry regiment. So you see a horse can go through all three degrees sometimes before he gets sold, and be a

good horse at the end of it. And I think that's about all!"

A cloud of youngsters, sweating freely and ready for any mischief, shot past on their way to breakfast, and the conversation ended in a cloud of sand and the drumming of hurrying hooves.

In the Raika-Bagh are more racing cups than this memory holds the names of. Chiefest of all was the Delhi Assemblage Cup — the Imperial Vase, of solid gold, won by *Crown Prince*. The other pieces of plate were not so imposing. But of all the Crown Jewels, the most valuable appeared at the end of the inspection. It was the small Maharaja Kanwar lolling in state in a huge barouche — his toes were at least two feet off the floor — that was taking him from his morning drive. "Have you seen *my* horses?" said the Maharaja Kanwar. The four twelve-hand ponies had been duly looked over, and the future ruler of Jodhpur departed satisfied.

XV

TREATS OF THE STARTLING EFFECT OF A REDUCTION IN WAGES AND THE PLEASURES OF LOAFERDOM. PAINTS THE STATE OF THE BOONDI ROAD AND THE TREACHERY OF GANESH OF SITUR.

"A TWENTY-FIVE per cent reduction all roun' an' no certain leave when you wants it. *Of* course the best men goes somewhere else. That's only natural, and 'ere's this sanguinary down mail a-stickin' in the eye of the Khundwa down! I tell you, Sir, Injia's a bad place — a very bad place. 'Tisn't what it was when I came out one and thirty year ago, an' the drivers was getting their seven and eight 'undred rupees a month an' was treated as *men*."

The Englishman was on his way to Nasirabad, and a gentleman in the Railway was explaining to him the real reason of the decadence of the Empire. It was because the Rajputana-Malwa Railway had cut all its employés twenty-five per cent. It is ungenerous to judge a caste by a few samples; but the Englishman had on the Road and elsewhere seen a good deal of gentlemen on the Railway, and they spend their pay in a manner that would do credit to an income of a thousand a month. Now they say that the twenty-five per cent reduction deprives them of all the pleasures of life. So much the better if it makes them moderately economical in their

expenditure. Revolving these things in his mind, together with one or two stories of extravagances not quite fit for publication, the Englishman came to Nasirabad, before sunrise, and there to an evil-looking tonga. Quoth Ram Baksh, proprietor, driver, *sais*, and everything else, calmly: "At this time of the year and having regard to the heat of the sun who wants a top to a tonga? I have no top. I have a top, but it would take till twelve o'clock to put it on. And behold Sahib, Padre Martum Sahib went in this tonga to Deoli. All the officer Sahibs of Deoli and Nasirabad go in this tonga for *shikar*. This is a 'shutin-tonga'!" "When Church and Army are brought against one, argument is in vain." But to take a soft, office-bred unfortunate into the wilderness, upon a skeleton, a diagram of a conveyance, is brutality. Ram Baksh did not see it, and headed his two thirteen-hand rats straight towards the morning sun, along a beautiful military road. "We shall get to Deoli in six hours," said Ram Baksh the boastful, and, even as he spoke, the spring of the tonga bar snapt "mit a harp-like melodious twang." "What does it matter?" said Ram Baksh. "Has the Sahib never seen a tonga-iron break before? Padre Martum Sahib and all the Officer Sahibs in Deoli—" "Ram Baksh," said the Englishman, sternly, "I am not a Padre Sahib nor an Officer Sahib, and if you say anything more about Padre Martum Sahib or the officer in Deoli I shall grow very angry, Ram Baksh."

"Humph," said Ram Baksh, "I knew you were not a Padre Sahib." The little mishap was patched up with string, and the tonga went on merrily. It is Stevenson who says that the "invitation to the road," nature's

great morning song, has not yet been properly understood or put to music. The first note of it is the sound of the dawn-wind through long grass. It is good, good beyond expression, to see the sun rise upon a strange land and to know that you have only to go forward and possess that land — that it will dower you before the day is ended with a hundred new impressions and, perhaps, one idea. It is good to snuff the wind when it comes in over large uplands or down from the tops of the blue Aravalis — dry and keen as a new-ground sword. Best of all is to light the First Pipe — is there any tobacco so good as that we burn in honour of the breaking day? — and, while the ponies wake the long white road with their hooves and the birds go abroad in companions together, to thank your stars that you are neither the Subaltern who has Orderly Room, the 'Stunt who has office, or the Judge who has the Court to attend; but are only a loafer in a flannel shirt bound, if God pleases, to "little Boondi," somewhere beyond the faint hills beyond the plain.

But there was alloy in this delight. Men had told the Englishman darkly that Boondi State had no love for Englishmen, that there was nowhere to stop, and that no one would do anything for money. Love was out of the question. Further, it was an acknowledged fact that there were no Englishmen of any kind in Boondi. But the Englishman trusted that Ganesh would be good to him, and that he would, somehow or other, fall upon his feet as he had fallen before. The road from Nasirabad to Deoli, being military in its nature, is nearly as straight as a ruler and about as smooth. Here and there little rocky hills, the last off-shoots of the Aravalis to the

west, break the ground; but the bulk of it is fair and without pimples. The Deoli Force are apparently so utterly Irregular that they can do without a telegraph, have their mails carried by runners, and dispense with bridges over all the fifty-six miles that separate them from Nasirabad. However, a man who goes shikarring for any length of time in one of Ram Baksh's tongas would soon learn to dispense with anything and everything. "*All* the Sahibs use my tonga; I've got eight of them and twenty pairs of horses," said Ram Baksh. "They go as far as Gangra, where the tigers are, for they are 'shutin-tongas.'" Now the Englishman knew Gangra slightly, having seen it on the way to Udaipur; and it was as perverse and rocky a place as any man would desire to see. He politely expressed doubt. "I tell you my tongas go anywhere," said Ram Baksh, testily. A hay-wagon — they cut and stack their hay in these parts — blocked the road. Ram Baksh ran the tonga to one side, into a rut, fetched up on a tree-stump, rebounded on to a rock, and struck the road again. "Observe," said Ram Baksh; "but that is nothing. You wait till we get on the Boondi Road, and I'll make you shake, shake like a bottle." "Is it *very* bad?" "I've never been to Boondi myself, but I hear it is all rocks — great rocks as big as this tonga." But though he boasted himself and his horses nearly all the way, he could not reach Deoli in anything like the time he had set forth. "If I am not at Boondi by four," he had said, at six in the morning, "let me go without my fee." But by midday he was still far from Deoli, and Boondi lay twenty-eight miles beyond that station. "What can I do?" said he. "I've laid out lots of horses — any amount. But the

fact is I've never been to Boondi. I shan't go there in the night." Ram Baksh's "lots of horses" were three pair between Nasirabad and Deoli — three pair of undersized ponies who did wonders. At one place, after he had quitted a cotton wagon, a drove of gipsies, and a man on horseback, with his carbine across his saddle-bow, the Englishman came to a stretch of road so utterly desolate that he said: "Now I am clear of everybody who ever knew me. This is the beginning of the waste into which the scape-goat was sent."

From a bush by the roadside sprang up a fat man who cried aloud in English: "How does Your Honour do? I met Your Honour in Simla this year. Are you quite well? Ya-as, I am here. Your Honour remembers me? I am travelling. Ya-as. Ha! Ha!" and he went on, leaving His Honour bemazed. It was a Babu — a Simla Babu, of that there could be no doubt; but who he was or what he was doing, thirty miles from anywhere, His Honour could not make out. The native moves about more than most folk, except railway people, imagine. The big banking firms of Upper India naturally keep in close touch with their great change-houses in Ajmir, despatching and receiving messengers regularly. So it comes to pass that the necessitous circumstances of Lieutenant McRannamack, of the Tyneside Tailtwisters, quartered on the Frontier, are thoroughly known and discussed, a thousand miles south of the cantonment where the light-hearted Lieutenant goes to his money-lender.

This is by the way. Let us return to the banks of the Banas River, where "poor Carey," as Tod calls him, came when he was sickening for his last illness. The Banas is

one of those streams which runs "over golden sands with feet of silver," but, from the scarp of its banks, Deoli in the rains must be isolated. Ram Baksh, questioned hereon, vowed that all the Officer Sahibs never dreamed of halting, but went over in boats or on elephants. According to Ram Baksh the men of Deoli must be wonderful creatures. They do nothing but use his tongas. A break in some low hills gives on to the dead flat plain in which Deoli stands. "You must stop here for the night," said Ram Baksh. "I will *not* take my horses forward in the dark; God knows where the dak-bungalow is. I've forgotten, but any one of the Officer Sahibs in Deoli will tell you."

Those in search of a new emotion would do well to run about an apparently empty cantonment, in a disgraceful shooting-tonga, hunting for a place to sleep in. Chaprassis come out of back verandahs, and are rude, and regimental Babus hop off godowns, and are flippant, while in the distance a Sahib looks out of his room, and eyes the dusty forlorn-hope with silent contempt. It should be mentioned that the dust on the Deoli Road not only powders but masks the face and raiment of the passenger.

Next morning Ram Baksh was awake with the dawn, and clamorous to go on to Boondi. "I've sent a pair of horses, big horses, out there and the *sais* is a fool. Perhaps they will be lost; I want to find them." He dragged his unhappy passenger on the road once more and demanded of all who passed the dak-bungalow which was the way to Boondi. "Observe," said he, "there can be only one road, and if I hit it we are all right, and I'll show you what the tonga can do." "Amen," said the

Englishman, devoutly, as the tonga jumped into and out of a larger hole. "Without doubt this is the Boondi Road," said Ram Baksh; "it is so bad."

It has been before said that the Boondi State has no great love for Sahibs. The state of the road proves it. "This," said Ram Baksh, tapping the wheel to see whether the last plunge had smashed a spoke, "is a very good road. You wait till you see what is ahead." And the funeral staggered on — over irrigation cuts, through buffalo wallows, and dried pools stamped with the hundred feet of kine (this, by the way, is the most cruel road of all), up rough banks where the rock ledges peered out of the dust, down steep-cut dips ornamented with large stones, and along two-feet deep ruts of the rains, where the tonga went slantwise even to the verge of upsetting. It was a royal road — a native road — a Raj road of the roughest, and, through all its jolts and bangs and bumps and dips and heaves, the eye of Ram Baksh rolled in its blood-shot socket, seeking for the "big horses" he had so rashly sent into the wilderness. The ponies that had done the last twenty miles into Deoli were nearly used up, and did their best to lie down in the dry beds of nullahs.

A man came by on horseback, his servant walking before with platter and meal-bag. "Have you seen any horses hereabouts?" cried Ram Baksh. "Horses? What the Devil have I to do with your horses? D'you think I've stolen them?" Now this was decidedly a strange answer, and showed the rudeness of the land. An old woman under a tree cried out in a strange tongue and ran away. It was a dream-like experience, this hunting for horses in a wilderness with neither

house nor hut nor shed in sight. "If we keep to the road long enough we must find them. Look at the road. This Raj ought to be smitten with bullets." Ram Baksh had been pitched forward nearly on the off-pony's rump, and was in a very bad temper indeed. The funeral found a house — a house walled with thorns — and near by were two big horses, thirteen-two if an inch, and harnessed quite regardless of expense.

Everything was repacked and rebound with triple ropes, and the Sahib was provided with an extra cushion; but he had reached a sort of dreamsome Nirvana, having several times bitten his tongue through, cut his boot against the wheel-edge, and twisted his legs into a true-lovers'-knot. There was no further sense of suffering in him. He was even beginning to enjoy himself faintly and by gasps. The road struck boldly into hills with all their teeth on edge, that is to say, their strata breaking across the road in little ripples. The effect of this was amazing. The tonga skipped merrily as a young fawn, from ridge to ridge. It shivered, it palpitated, it shook, it slid, it hopped, it waltzed, it ricochetted, it bounded like a kangaroo, it blundered like a sledge, it swayed like a top-heavy coach on a down-grade, it "kicked" like a badly coupled railway carriage, it squelched like a country-cart, it squeaked in its torment, and lastly, it essayed to plough up the ground with its nose. After three hours of this performance, it struck a tiny little ford, set between steeply sloping banks of white dust, where the water was clear brown and full of fish. And here a blissful halt was called under the shadow of the high bank of a tobacco field.

Would you taste one of the real pleasures of Life?

Go through severe acrobatic exercises in and about a tonga for four hours; then, having eaten and drank till you can no more, sprawl in the cool of a nullah bed with your head among the green tobacco, and your mind adrift with the one little cloud in a royally blue sky. Earth has nothing more to offer her children than this deep delight of animal well-being. There were butterflies in the tobacco — six different kinds, and a little rat came out and drank at the ford. To him succeeded the flight into Egypt. The white banks of the ford framed the picture perfectly — the Mother in blue, on a great white donkey, holding the Child in her arms, and Joseph walking beside, his hand upon the donkey's withers. By all the laws of the East, Joseph should have been riding and the Mother walking. This was an exception decreed for the Englishman's special benefit. It was very warm and very pleasant, and, somehow, the passers by the ford grew indistinct, and the nullah became a big English garden, with a cuckoo singing far down in the orchard, among the apple-blossoms. The cuckoo started the dream. He was the only real thing in it, for on waking the garden slipped back into the water, but the cuckoo remained and called and called for all the world as though he had been a veritable English cuckoo. "Cuckoo — cuckoo — cuck;" then a pause and renewal of the cry from another quarter of the horizon. After that the ford became distasteful, so the procession was driven forward and in time plunged into what must have been a big city once, but the only inhabitants were oil-men. There were abundance of tombs here, and one carried a life-like carving in high relief of a man on horseback spearing a foot-soldier.

Hard by this place the road or rut turned by great gardens, very cool and pleasant, full of tombs and black-faced monkeys who quarrelled among the tombs, and shut in from the sun by gigantic banians and mango trees. Under the trees and behind the walls, priests sat singing; and the Englishman would have inquired into what strange place he had fallen, but the men did not understand him.

Ganesh is a mean little God of circumscribed powers. He was dreaming, with a red and flushed face, under a banian tree; and the Englishman gave him four annas to arrange matters comfortably at Boondi. His priest took the four annas, but Ganesh did nothing whatever, as shall be shown later. His only excuse is that his trunk was a good deal worn, and he would have been better for some more silver leaf, but that was no fault of the Englishman.

Beyond the dead city was a jhil, full of snipe and duck, winding in and out of the hills; and beyond the jhil, hidden altogether among the hills, was Boondi. The nearer to the city the viler grew the road and the more overwhelming the curiosity of the inhabitants. But what befel at Boondi must be reserved for another chapter.

XVI

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS AND THE EXPLOITATION OF BOONDI. THE CASTAWAY OF THE DISPENSARY AND THE CHILDREN OF THE SCHOOLS. A CONSIDERATION OF THE SHIELDS OF RAJASTHAN AND OTHER TRIFLES.

It is high time that a new treaty were made with Maha Rao Raja Ram Singh, Bahadur, Raja of Boondi. He keeps the third article of the old one too faithfully, which says that he "shall not enter into negotiations with any one without the consent of the British Government." He does not negotiate at all. Arrived at Boondi Gate, the Englishman asked where he might lay his head for the night, and the Quarter Guard with one accord said: "The Sukh Mahal, which is beyond the city," and the tonga went thither through the length of the town till it arrived at a pavilion on a lake — a place of two turrets connected by an open colonnade. The "house" was open to the winds of heaven and the pigeons of the Raj; but the latter had polluted more than the first could purify. A snowy-bearded *chowkidar* crawled out of a place of tombs, which he seemed to share with some monkeys, and threw himself into Anglo-Saxon attitudes. He was a great deal worse than Ram Baksh, for he said that all the Officer Sahibs of Deoli came to the Sukh Mahal for *shikar* and — never went away again, so pleased were they. The Sahib had brought

the Honour of his Presence, and he was a very old man, and without a written permit could do nothing. Then he fell deeply asleep without warning; and there was a pause, of one hour only, which the Englishman spent in seeing the lake. It, like the jhils on the road, wound in and out among the hills, and, on the bund side, was bounded by a hill of black rock crowned with a *chhatri* of grey stone. Below the bund was a garden as fair as eye could wish, and the shores of the lake were dotted with little temples. Given a habitable house, — a mere dak-bungalow, — it would be a delightful spot to rest in. Warned by some bitter experiences in the past, the Englishman knew that he was in for the demi-semi-royal or embarrassing reception, when a man, being the unwelcome guest of a paternal State, is neither allowed to pay his way and make himself comfortable, nor is he willingly entertained. When he saw a one-eyed *munshi* (clerk), he felt certain that Ganesh had turned upon him at last. The *munshi* demanded and received the *purwana*, or written permit. Then he sat down and questioned the traveller exhaustively as to his character and profession. Having thoroughly satisfied himself that the visitor was in no way connected with the Government or the "Agenty Sahib Bahadur," he took no further thought of the matter and the day began to draw in upon a grassy bund, an open-work pavilion, and a disconsolate tonga.

At last the faithful servitor, who had helped to fight the Battle of the Mail Bags at Udaipur, broke his silence, and vowing that all these devil-people — not more than twelve — had only come to see the fun, suggested the breaking of the *munshi's* head. And, indeed, that

seemed the best way of breaking the ice; for the *munshi* had, in the politest possible language, put forward the suggestion that there was nothing particular to show that the Sahib who held the *purwana* had really any right to hold it. The *chowkidar* woke up and chanted a weird chant, accompanied by the Anglo-Saxon attitudes, a new set. He was an old man, and all the Sahib-log said so, and within the pavilion were tables and chairs and lamps and bath-tubs, and everything that the heart of man could desire. Even now an enormous staff of menials were arranging all these things for the comfort of the Sahib Bahadur and Protector of the Poor, who had brought the honour and glory of his Presence all the way from Deoli. What did tables and chairs and eggs and fowls and very bright lamps matter to the Raj? He was an old man and . . . "Who put the present Raja on the throne?" "Lake Sahib," promptly answered the *chowkidar*. "I was there. That is the news of many old years." Now Tod says it was he himself who installed "Lalji the beloved" in the year 1821. The Englishman began to lose faith in the *chowkidar*. The *munshi* said nothing but followed the Englishman with his one workable eye. A merry little breeze crisped the waters of the lake, and the fish began to frolic before going to bed.

"Is nobody going to do or bring anything?" said the Englishman, faintly, wondering whether the local gaol would give him a bed if he killed the *munshi*. "I am an old man," said the *chowkidar*, "and because of their great respect and reverence for the Sahib in whose Presence I am only a bearer of orders and a servant awaiting them, men, many men, are bringing now tent-

flies which I with my own hands will wrap, here and there, there and here, in and about the pillars of the place; and thus you, O Sahib, who have brought the honour of your Presence to the Boondi Raj over the road to Deoli, which is a *kutcha* road, will be provided with a very fine and large apartment over which I will watch while you go to kill the tigers in these hills.

By this time two youths had twisted *canvas* round some of the pillars of the colonnade, making a sort of loose-box with a two-foot air-way all round the top. There was no door, but there were unlimited windows. Into this enclosure the *chowkidar* heaped furniture on which many generations of pigeons had evidently been carried off by cholera, until he was entreated to desist. "What," said he, scornfully, "are tables and chairs to this Raj? If six be not enough, let the Presence give an order, and twelve shall be forthcoming. Everything shall be forthcoming." Here he filled a native lamp with kerosene oil and set it in a box upon a stick. Luckily, the oil which he poured so lavishly from a quart bottle was bad, or he would have been altogether consumed.

Night had fallen long before this magnificence was ended. The superfluous furniture — chairs for the most part — was shovelled out into the darkness, and by the light of a flamboyant lamplet — a merry wind forbade candles — the Englishman went to bed, and was lulled to sleep by the rush of the water escaping from the overflow trap and the splash of the water-turtle as he missed the evasive fish. It was a curious sight. Cats and dogs rioted about the enclosure, and a wind from the lake bellied the canvas. The brushwood of the hills around

snapped and cracked as beasts went through it, and creatures — not jackals — made dolorous noises. On the lake it seemed that hundreds of water-birds were keeping a hotel, and that there were arrivals and departures throughout the night. The Raj insisted upon providing a guard of two sepoys, very pleasant men, on four rupees a month. These said that tigers sometimes wandered about on the hills above the lake, but were most generally to be found five miles away. And the Englishman promptly dreamed that a one-eyed tiger came into his tent without a *purwana*. But it was only a wild cat after all; and it fled before the shoes of civilisation.

The Sukh Mahal was completely separated from the city, and might have been a country-house. It should be mentioned that Boondi is jammed into a V-shaped gorge — the valley at the main entrance being something less than five hundred yards across. As it splays out, the thickly packed houses follow its lines, and, seen from above, seem like cattle herded together preparatory to a stampede through the gate. Owing to the set of the hills, very little of the city is visible except from the Palace. It was in search of this latter that the Englishman went abroad and became so interested in the streets that he forgot all about it for a time. Jeypore is a show-city and is decently drained; Udaipur is blessed with a State Engineer and a printed form of Government; for Jodhpur the dry sand, the burning sun, and an energetic doctor have done a good deal, but Boondi has none of these things. The crampedness of the locality aggravates the evil, and it can only be in the rains which channel and furrow the rocky hillsides that Boondi is at all swept out. The Nal Sagar, a lovely

little stretch of water, takes up the head of the valley called Banda Gorge, and must, in the nature of things, receive a good deal of unholy drainage. But setting aside this weakness, it is a fascinating place — this jumbled city of straight streets and cool gardens, where gigantic mangoes and peepuls intertwine over gurgling water-courses, and the cuckoo comes at midday. It boasts no foolish Municipality to decree when a house is dangerous and uninhabitable. The newer shops are built into, on to, over, and under time-blackened ruins of an older day, and the little children skip about tottering arcades and grass-grown walls, while their parents chatter below in the crowded bazaar. In the black slums, the same stones seem to be used over and over again for house-building. Wheeled conveyances are scarce in Boondi city — there is scant room for carts, and the streets are paved with knobsome stones, unpleasant to walk over. From time to time an inroad of *Bunjaras'* pack-bullocks sweeps the main streets clear of life, or one of the Raja's elephants — he has twelve of them — blocks the way. But, for the most part, the foot-passengers have all the city for their own.

They do not hurry themselves. They sit in the sun and think, or put on all the arms in the family, and, hung with ironmongery, parade before their admiring friends. Others, lean, dark men, with bound jaws and only a tulwar for weapon, dive in and out of the dark alleys, on errands of State. It is a beautifully lazy city, doing everything in the real, true, original native way, and it is kept in very good order by the Durbar. There either is or is not an order for everything, There is no order to sell fishing-hooks, or to supply an English-

man with milk, or to change for him currency notes. He must only deal with the Durbar for whatever he requires; and wherever he goes he must be accompanied by at least two armed men. They will tell him nothing, for they know or affect to know nothing of the city. They will do nothing except shout at the little innocents who joyfully run after the stranger and demand *pice*, but there they are, and there they will stay till he leaves the city, accompanying him to the gate, and waiting there a little to see that he is fairly off and away. Englishmen are not encouraged in Boondi. The intending traveller would do well to take a full suit of Political uniform with the sunflowers, and the little black sword to sit down upon. The local god is the "Agenty Sahib," and he is an incarnation without a name — at least among the lower classes. The educated, when speaking of him, always use the courtly "Bahadur" affix; and yet it is a mean thing to gird at a State which, after all, is not bound to do anything for intrusive Englishmen without any visible means of livelihood. The King of this fair city should declare the blockade absolute, and refuse to be troubled with any one except "Colon-nel Baltah, Agenty Sahib Bahadur" and the Politicals. If ever a railway is run through Kotah, as men on the Bombay side declare it must be, the cloistered glory of Boondi will depart, for Kotah is only twenty miles easterly of the city and the road is moderately good. In that day the Globe-trotter will pry about the place, and the Charitable Dispensary — a gem among dispensaries — will be public property.

The Englishman was hunting for the statue of a horse, a great horse hight Hunja, who was a steed of Irak, and

a King's gift to Rao Omeda, one time monarch of Boondi. He found it in the city square as Tod had said; and it was an unlovely statue, carven after the dropsical fashion of later Hindu art. No one seemed to know anything about it. A little further on, one cried from a byway in rusty English: "Come and see my Dispensary." There are only two men in Boondi who speak English. One is the head, and the other the assistant, teacher of the English side of Boondi Free School. The third was, some twenty years ago, a pupil of the Lahore Medical College when that institution was young; and he only remembered a word here and there. He was head of the Charitable Dispensary; and insisted upon, then and there, organising a small levee and pulling out all his books. Escape was hopeless: nothing less than a formal inspection and introduction to all the native physicians would serve. There were sixteen beds in and about the courtyard, and between twenty and thirty out-patients stood in attendance. Making allowances for untouched Orientalism, the Dispensary is a good one, and must relieve a certain amount of human misery. There is no other in all Boondi. The operation-book, kept in English, showed the principal complaints of the country. They were: "Asthama," "Numonia," "Skindiseas," "Dabalaty" and "Loin-bite." This last item occurred again and again — three and four cases per week — and it was not until the Doctor said "*Sher se mara*" that the Englishman read it aright. It was "lion-bite," or tiger, if you insist upon zoological accuracy. There was one incorrigible idiot, a handsome young man, naked as the day, who sat in the sunshine, shivering and pressing his

hands to his head. "I have given him blisters and setons — have tried native and English treatment for two years, but it is no use. He is always as you see him, and now he stays here by the favour of the Durbar, which is a very good and pitiful Durbar," said the Doctor. There were many such pensioners of the Durbar — men afflicted with chronic "asthama" who stayed "by favour," and were kindly treated. They were resting in the sunshine their hands on their knees, sure that their daily dole of grain and tobacco and opium would be forthcoming. "All folk, even little children, eat opium here," said the Doctor, and the diet-book proved it. After laborious investigation of everything, down to the last indent to Bombay for Europe medicines, the Englishman was suffered to depart. "Sir, I thank . . . ," began the Native Doctor, but the rest of the sentence stuck. Sixteen years in Boondi does not increase knowledge of English; and he went back to his patients, gravely conning over the name of the Principal of the Lahore Medical School — a College now — who had taught him all he knew, and to whom he intended to write. There was something pathetic in the man's catching at news from the outside world of men he had known as Assistant and House Surgeons who are now Rai Bahadurs, and his parade of the few shreds of English that still clung to him. May he treat "loin-bites" and "catrack" successfully for many years. In the happy, indolent fashion that must have merits which we cannot understand, he is doing a good work, and the Durbar allows his Dispensary as much as it wants.

Close to the Dispensary stood the Free School, and thither an importunate *munshi* steered the Englishman,

who, by this time, was beginning to persuade herself that he really was an accredited agent of Government, sent to report on the progress of Boondi. From a peepul-shaded courtyard came a clamour of young voices. Thirty or forty little ones, from five to eight years old, were sitting in an open verandah learning accounts and Hindustani, said the teacher. No need to ask from what castes they came, for it was written on their faces that they were Mahajans, Oswals, Aggerwals, and in one or two cases, it seemed, Sharawaks of Guzerat. They were learning the business of their lives, and, in time, would take their father's places, and show in how many ways money might be manipulated. Here the profession-type came out with startling distinctness. Through the chubbiness of almost babyhood, or the delicate suppleness of maturer years, in mouth and eyes and hands, it betrayed itself. The Rahtor, who comes of a fighting stock, is a fine animal, and well bred; the Hara, who seems to be more compactly built, is also a fine animal; but for a race that show blood in every line of their frame, from the arch of the instep to the modelling of the head, the financial — trading is too coarse a word — the financial class of Rajputana appears to be the most remarkable. Later in life may become clouded with fat jowl and paunch; but in his youth, his quick-eyed, nimble youth, the young Marwar, to give him his business title, is really a thing of beauty. His manners are courtly. The bare ground and a few slates sufficed for the children who were merely learning the ropes that drag States; but the English class, of boys from ten to twelve, was supplied with real benches and forms and a table with a cloth top. The assistant teacher, for the head was on

leave, was a self-taught man of Boondi, young and delicate looking, who preferred reading to speaking English. His youngsters were supplied with "The Third English Reading Book," and were painfully thumbing their way through a doggerel poem about an "old man with hoary hair." One boy, bolder than the rest, slung an English sentence at the visitor, and collapsed. It was his little stock-in-trade, and the rest regarded him enviously. The Durbar supports the school, which is entirely free and open; a just distinction being maintained between the various castes. The old race prejudice against payment for knowledge came out in reply to a question. "You must not sell teaching," said the teacher; and the class murmured applausively, "You must not sell teaching."

The population of Boondi seems more obviously mixed than that of the other States. There are four or five thousand Mahometans within its walls, and a sprinkling of aborigines of various varieties, besides the human raffle that the Bunjaras bring in their train, with Pathans and sleek Delhi men. The new heraldry of the State is curious — something after this sort. *Or*, a demi-god, *sable*, issuant of flames, holding in right hand a sword and in the left a bow — *all proper*. In chief, a dagger of the *second*, sheathed *vert*, fessewise over seven arrows in sheaf of the *second*. This latter blazon Boondi holds in commemoration of the defeat of an Imperial Prince who rebelled against the Delhi Throne in the days of Jehangir, when Boondi, for value received, took service under the Mahometan. It might also be, but here there is no certainty, the memorial of Rao Rutton's victory over Prince Khoorm, when the latter

strove to raise all Rajputana against Jehangir his father; or of a second victory over a riotous lordling who harried Mewar a little later. For this exploit, the annals say, Jehangir gave Rao Rutton honorary flags and kettle-drums which may have been melted down by the science of the Heralds College into the blazon aforesaid. All the heraldry of Rajputana is curious, and, to such as hold that there is any worth in the "Royal Science," interesting. Udaipur's shield is, naturally *gules*, a sun in splendour, as befits the "children of the Sun and Fire," and one of the most ancient houses in India. Her crest is the straight Rajput sword, the *Khanda*, for an account of the worship of which very powerful divinity read Tod. The supporters are a Bhil and a Rajput, attired for the forlorn-hope; commemorating not only the defences of Chitor, but also the connection of the great Bappa Rawul with the Bhils, who even now play the principal part in the Crown-Marking of a Rana of Udaipur. Here, again, Tod explains the matter at length. Banswara claims alliance with Udaipur, and carries a sun, with a label of difference of some kind. Jeypore has the five-coloured flag of Amber with a sun, because the House claim descent from Rama, and her crest is a kuchnar tree, which is the bearing of Dasaratha, father of Rama. The white horse, which faces the tiger as supporter, may or may not be memorial of the great *aswamedha yuga*, or horse sacrifice, that Jey Singh, who built Jeypore, did — *not* carry out.

Jodhpur has the five-coloured flag, with a falcon, in which shape Durga, the patron Goddess of the State, has been sometimes good enough to appear. She has perched in the form of a wagtail on the howdah of the

Chief of Jeysulmir, whose shield is blazoned with "forts in a desert land," and a naked left arm holding a broken spear, because, the legend goes, Jeysulmir was once galled by a horse with a magic spear. They tell the story to-day, but it is a long one. The supporters of the shield — this is canting heraldry with a vengeance! — are antelopes of the desert spangled with gold coin, because the State was long the refuge of the wealthy bankers of India.

Bikanir, a younger House of Jodhpur, carries three white hawks on the five-coloured flag. The patron Goddess of Bikanir once turned the thorny jungle round the city to fruit trees, and the crest therefore is a green tree — strange emblem for a desert principality. The motto, however, is a good one. When the greater part of the Rajput States were vassals of Akbar, and he sent them abroad to do his will, certain Princes objected to crossing the Indus, and asked Bikanir to head the mutiny because his State was the least accessible. He consented, on condition that they would all for one day greet him thus: "*Jey Jangal dar Badshah!*" History shows what became of the objectors, and Bikanir's motto: "Hail to the King of the Waste!" proves that the tale *must* be true. But from Boondi to Bikanir is a long digression, bred by idleness on the bund of the Burra. It would have been sinful not to let down a line into those crowded waters, and the Guards, who were Mahometans, said that if the Sahib did not eat fish, they did. And the Sahib fished luxuriously, catching two and three pounders, of a perch-like build, whenever he chose to cast. He was wearied of schools and dispensaries, and the futility of heraldry accorded well with sloth — that is to say Boondi.

It should be noted, none the less, that in this part of the world the soberest mind will believe anything — believe in the ghosts by the Gau Mukh, and the dead Thakurs who get out of their tombs and ride round the Burra Talao at Boondi — will credit every legend and lie that rises as naturally as the red flush of sunset, to gild the dead glories of Rajasthan.

XVII

SHOWS THAT THERE MAY BE POETRY IN A BANK, AND ATTEMPTS TO SHOW THE WONDERS OF THE PALACE OF BOONDI.

"This is a devil's place you have come to, Sahib. No grass for the horses, and the people don't understand anything, and their dirty *pice* are no good in Nasirabad. Look here." Ram Baksh wrathfully exhibited a handful of lumps of copper. The nuisance of taking a native out of his own beat is that he forthwith regards you not only as the author of his being, but of all his misfortunes as well. He is as hampering as a frightened child and as irritating as a man. "Padre Martum Sahib never came here," said Ram Baksh, with an air of one who had been led against his will into bad company.

A story about a rat that found a piece of turmeric and set up a bunnia's shop had sent the one-eyed *munshi* away, but a company of lesser *munshis*, runners, and the like were in attendance, and they said that money might be changed at the Treasury, which was in the Palace. It was quite impossible to change it anywhere else — there was no order. From the Sukh Mahal to the Palace the road ran through the heart of the city, and by reason of the continual shouting of the *munshis*, not more than ten thousand of the fifty thousand people of Boondi knew for what purpose the Sahib was journeying

through their midst. Cataract was the most prevalent affliction, cataract in its worst forms, and it was, therefore, necessary that men should come very close to look at the stranger. They were in no sense rude, but they stared devoutly. "He has not come for *shikar*, and he will not take petitions. He has come to see the place, and God knows what he is." The description was quite correct, as far as it went; but, somehow or another, when shouted out at four crossways in the midst of a very pleasant little gathering it did not seem to add to dignity or command respect.

It has been written "the *coup d'œil* of the castellated Palace of Boondi, from whichever side you approach it, is perhaps the most striking in India. Whoever has seen the Palace of Boondi can easily picture to himself the hanging gardens of Semiramis." This is true — and more too. To give on paper any adequate idea of the Boondi-ki-Mahal is impossible. Jeypore Palace may be called the Versailles of India; Udaipur's House of State is dwarfed by the hills round it and the spread of the Pichola Lake; Jodhpur's House of Strife, grey towers on red rock, is the work of giants, but the Palace of Boondi, even in broad daylight, is such a Palace as men build for themselves in uneasy dreams — the work of goblins more than of men. It is built into and out of the hillside, in gigantic terrace on terrace, and dominates the whole of the city. But a detailed description of it were useless. Owing to the dip of the valley in which the city stands, it can only be well seen from one place, the main road of the city; and from that point looks like an avalanche of masonry ready to rush down and block the gorge. Like all the other Palaces

of Rajputana, it is the work of many hands, and the present Raja has thrown out a bastion of no small size on one of the lower levels, which has been four or five years in the building. No one knows where the hill begins and where the Palace ends. Men say that there are subterranean chambers leading into the heart of the hills, and passages communicating with the extreme limits of Taragarh, the giant fortress that crowns the hill and flanks the whole of the valley on the Palace side. They say that there is as much room under as above ground, and that none have traversed the whole extent of the Palace. Looking at it from below, the Englishman could readily believe that nothing was impossible for those who had built it. The dominant impression was of height — height that heaved itself out of the hillside and weighed upon the eyelids of the beholder. The steep slope of the land had helped the builders in securing this effect. From the main road of the city a steep stone-paved ascent led to the first gate — name not communicated by the zealous following. Two gaudily painted fishes faced each other over the arch, and there was little except glaring colour ornamentation visible. This gate gave into what they called the *chowk* of the Palace, and one had need to look twice ere realising that this open space, crammed with human life, was a spur of the hill on which the Palace stood, paved and built over. There had been little attempt at levelling the ground. The foot-worn stones followed the contours of the ground, and ran up to the walls of the Palace smooth as glass. Immediately facing the Gate of the Fish was the Quarter-Guard barracks, a dark and dirty room, and here, in a chamber hollowed

out in a wall, were stored the big drums of State, the *nakarras*. The appearance of the Englishman seemed to be the signal for smiting the biggest of all, and the dull thunder rolled up the Palace *chowk*, and came back from the unpierced Palace walls in hollow groaning. It was an eerie welcome — this single, sullen boom. In this enclosure, four hundred years ago, if the legend be true, a son of the great Rao Bando, who dreamed a dream as Pharaoh did and saved Boondi from famine, left a little band of Haras to wait his bidding while he went up into the Palace and slew his two uncles who had usurped the throne and abandoned the faith of their fathers. When he had pierced one and hacked the other, as they sat alone and unattended, he called out to his followers, who made a slaughter-house of the enclosure and cut up the usurpers' adherents. At the best of times men slip on these smooth stones; and when the place was swimming in blood, foothold must have been treacherous indeed.

An inquiry for the place of the murder of the uncles — it is marked by a staircase slab, or Tod, the accurate, is at fault — was met by the answer that the Treasury was close at hand. They speak a pagan tongue in Boondi, swallow half their words, and adulterate the remainder with local patois. What can be extracted from a people who call four miles variously *do kosh*, *do kush*, *dhi hkas*, *doo-a koth*, and *diakast* all one word? The country-folk are quite unintelligible; which simplifies matters. It is the catching of a shadow of a meaning here and there, the hunting for directions cloaked in dialect, that is annoying. Foregoing his archæological researches, the Englishman sought the Treasury. He took careful

notes; he even made a very bad drawing, but the Treasury of Boondi defied pinning down before the public. There was a gash in the brown flank of the Palace — and this gash was filled with people. A broken bees' comb with the whole hive busily at work on repairs will give a very fair idea of this extraordinary place — the Heart of Boondi. The sunlight was very vivid without and the shadows were heavy within, so that little could be seen except this clinging mass of humanity wriggling like maggots in a carcass. A stone staircase ran up to a rough verandah built out of the wall, and in the wall was a cave-like room, the guardian of whose depths was one of the refined financial classes, a man with very small hands and soft, low voice. He was girt with a sword, and held authority over the Durbar funds. He referred the Englishman courteously to another branch of the department, to find which necessitated a blundering progress up another narrow staircase crowded with loungers of all kinds. Here everything shone from constant contact of bare feet and hurrying bare shoulders. The staircase was the thing that, seen from without, had produced the bees' comb impression. At the top was a long verandah shaded from the sun, and here the Boondi Treasury worked, under the guidance of a grey-haired old man, whose sword lay by the side of his comfortably wadded cushion. He controlled twenty or thirty writers, each wrapped round a huge, country paper account-book, and each far too busy to raise his eyes.

The babble on the staircase might have been the noise of the sea so far as these men were concerned. It ebbed and flowed in regular beats, and spread out far into the

courtyard below. Now and again the *click-click-click* of a scabbard tip being dragged against the wall, cut the dead sound of tramping naked feet, and a soldier would stumble up the narrow way into the sunlight. He was received, and sent back or forward by a knot of keen-eyed loungers, who seemed to act as a buffer between the peace of the Secretariat and the pandemonium of the Administrative. *Saises* and grass-cutters, mahouts of elephants, brokers, mahajuns, villagers from the district, and here and there a shock-headed aborigine, swelled the mob on and at the foot of the stairs. As they came up, they met the buffer-men who spoke in low voices and appeared to filter them according to their merits. Some were sent to the far end of the verandah, where everything melted away in a fresh crowd of dark faces. Others were sent back, and joined the detachment shuffling for their shoes in the *chowk*. One servant of the Palace withdrew himself to the open, underneath the verandah, and there sat yapping from time to time like a hungry dog: "The grass! The grass! The grass!" But the men with the account-books never stirred. And they bowed their heads gravely and made entry or erasure, turning back the rustling leaves. Not often does a reach of the River of Life so present itself that it can without alteration be transferred to canvas. But the Treasury of Boondi, the view up the long verandah, stood complete and ready for any artist who cared to make it his own. And by that lighter and less malicious irony of Fate, who is always giving nuts to those who have no teeth, the picture was clinched and brought together by a winking, brass hookah-bowl of quaint design, pitched carelessly upon a roll of dull red cloth

in the foreground. The faces of the accountants were of pale gold, for they were an untanned breed, and the face of the old man, their controller, was frosted silver.

It was a strange Treasury, but no other could have suited the Palace. The Englishman watched, open-mouthed, blaming himself because he could not catch the meaning of the orders given to the flying chaprassies, nor make anything of the hum in the verandah and the tumult on the stairs. The old man took the commonplace currency note and announced his willingness to give change in silver. "We have no small notes here," he said. "They are not wanted. In a little while, when you next bring the Honour of your Presence this way, you shall find the silver."

The Englishman was taken down the steps and fell into the arms of a bristly giant who had left his horse in the courtyard, and the giant spoke at length waving his arms in the air, but the Englishman could not understand him and dropped into the hubbub at the Palace foot. Except the main lines of the building there is nothing straight or angular about it. The rush of people seems to have rounded and softened every corner, as a river grinds down boulders. From the lowest tier, two zigzags, all of rounded stones sunk in mortar, took the Englishman to a gate where two carved elephants were thrusting at each other over the arch; and, because neither he nor any one round him could give the gate a name, he called it the "Gate of the Elephants." Here the noise from the Treasury was softened, and entry through the gate brought him into a well-known world, the drowsy peace of a King's Palace. There was a courtyard surrounded

by stables, in which were kept chosen horses, and two or three grooms were sleeping in the sun. There was no other life except the whir and coo of the pigeons. In time — though there really is no such a thing as time off the line of railway — an official appeared begirt with the skewer-like keys that open the native bayonet-locks, each from six inches to a foot long. Where was the Raj Mahal in which, sixty-six years ago, Tod formally installed Ram Singh, "who is now in his eleventh year, fair and with a lively, intelligent cast of face"? The warden made no answer, but led to a room, overlooking the courtyard, in which two armed men stood before an empty throne of white marble. They motioned silently that none must pass immediately before the seat of the King, but go round, keeping to the far side of the double row of pillars. Near the walls were stone slabs pierced to take the butts of long, venomous, black bamboo lances; rude coffers were disposed about the room, and ruder sketches of Ganesh adorned the walls. "The men," said the warden, "watch here day and night because this place is the Rutton Daulat." That, you will concede, is lucid enough. He who does not understand it, may go to for a thick-headed barbarian.

From the Rutton Daulat the warden unlocked doors that led into a hall of audience — the Chutter Mahal — built by Raja Chutter Lal, who was killed more than two hundred years ago in the latter days of Shah Jehan for whom he fought. Two rooms, each supported on double rows of pillars, flank the open space, in the centre of which is a marble reservoir. Here the Englishman looked anxiously for some of the atrocities of the West, and was pleased to find that, with the exception of a vase

of artificial flowers and a clock, there was nothing that jarred with the exquisite pillars, and the raw blaze of colour in the roofs of the rooms. In the middle of these impertinent observations, something sighed — sighed like a distressed ghost. Unaccountable voices are at all times unpleasant, especially when the hearer is some hundred feet or so above ground in an unknown Palace in an unknown land. A gust of wind had found its way through one of the latticed balconies, and had breathed upon a thin plate of metal, some astrological instrument, slung gongwise on a tripod. The tone was as soft as that of an Æolian harp, and, because of the surroundings, infinitely more plaintive.

There was an inlaid ivory door, set in lintel and posts crusted with looking-glass — all apparently old work. This opened into a darkened room where there were gilt and silver charpoys, and portraits, in the native fashion, of the illustrious dead of Boondi. Beyond the darkness was a balcony clinging to the sheer side of the Palace, and it was then that the Englishman realised to what a height he had climbed without knowing it. He looked down upon the bustle of the Treasury and the stream of life flowing into and out of the Gate of the Fishes where the big drums lie. Lifting his eyes, he saw how Boondi City had built itself, spreading from west to east as the confined valley became too narrow and the years more peaceable. The Boondi hills are the barrier that separates the stony, uneven ground near Deoli from the flats of Kotah, twenty miles away. From the Palace balcony the road to the eye is clear to the banks of the Chumbul River, which was the Debatable Ford in times gone by and was leaped, as all rivers with any preten-

sions to a pedigree have been, by more than one magic horse. Northward and easterly the hills run out to Indurgarh, and southward and westerly to territory marked "disputed" on the map in the present year of grace. From this balcony the Raja can see to the limit of his territory eastward, his empire all under his hand. He is, or the Politicals err, that same Ram Singh who was installed by Tod in 1821, and for whose success in killing his first deer, Tod was, by the Queen-Mother of Boondi, bidden to rejoice. To-day the people of Boondi say: "This Durbar is very old; so old that few men remember its beginning, for that was in our father's time." It is related also of Boondi that, on the occasion of the Queen's Jubilee, they said proudly that their ruler had reigned for sixty years, and he was a man. They saw nothing astonishing in the fact of a woman having reigned for fifty. History does not say whether they jubilated; for there are no Englishmen in Boondi to write accounts of demonstrations and foundation-stone laying to the daily newspaper, and Boondi is very, very small. In the early morning you may see a man pantingly chased out of the city by another man with a naked sword. This is the mail and the mail-guard; and the effect is as though runner and swordsman lay under a doom — the one to fly with the fear of death always before him, as men fly in dreams, and the other to perpetually fail of his revenge.

The warden unlocked more doors and led the Englishman still higher, but into a garden — a heavily timbered garden with a tank for gold fish in the midst. For once the impassive following smiled when they saw that the Englishman was impressed.

"This," said they, "is the Rang Bilas." "But who made it?" "Who knows? It was made long ago." The Englishman looked over the garden-wall, a foot-high parapet, and shuddered. There was only the flat side of the Palace, and a drop on to the stones of the zigzag scores of feet below. Above him was the riven hillside and the decaying wall of Taragarh, and behind him this fair garden, hung like Mahomet's coffin, but full of the noise of birds and the talking of the wind in the branches. The warden entered into a lengthy explanation of the nature of the delusion, showing how — but he was stopped before he was finished. His listener did not want to know "how the trick was done." Here was the garden, and there were three or four storeys climbed to reach it. At one end of the garden was a small room, under treatment by native artists who were painting the panels with historical pictures, in distemper. Theirs was florid polychromatic art, but skirting the floor was a series of frescoes in red, black, and white, of combats with elephants, bold and temperate as good German work. They were worn and defaced in places; but the hand of some bygone limner, who did not know how to waste a line, showed under the bruises and scratches, and put the newer work to shame.

Here the tour of the Palace ended; and it must be remembered that the Englishman had not gone the depth of three rooms into one flank. Acres of building lay to the right of him, and above the lines of the terraces he could see the tops of green trees. "Who knew how many gardens, such as the Rang Bilas, were to be found in the Palace?" No one answered directly, but all said that there were many. The warden gath-

ered up his keys, and, locking each door behind him as he passed, led the way down to earth. But before he had crossed the garden the Englishman heard, deep down in the bowels of the Palace, a woman's voice singing, and the voice rang as do voices in caves. All Palaces in India excepting dead ones, such as that of Amber, are full of eyes. In some, as has been said, the idea of being watched is stronger than in others. In Boondi Palace it was overpowering — being far worse than in the green shuttered corridors of Jodhpur. There were trap-doors on the tops of terraces, and windows veiled in foliage, and bull's-eyes set low in unexpected walls, and many other peep-holes and places of vantage. In the end, the Englishman looked devoutly at the floor, but when the voice of the woman came up from under his feet, he felt that there was nothing left for him but to go. Yet, excepting only this voice, there was deep silence everywhere, and nothing could be seen.

The warden returned to the Chutter Mahal to pick up a lost key. The brass table of the planets was sighing softly to itself as it swung to and fro in the wind. That was the last view of the interior of the Palace, the empty court, and the swinging, sighing astrolabe.

About two hours afterwards, when he had reached the other side of the valley and seen the full extent of the buildings, the Englishman began to realise first that he had not been taken through one-tenth of the Palace; and secondly, that he would do well to measure its extent by acres, in preference to meaner measures. But what made him blush hotly, all alone among the tombs on the hillside, was the idea that he with his ridiculous

demands for eggs, firewood, and sweet drinking water should have clattered and chattered through any part of it at all.

He began to understand why Boondi does not encourage Englishmen.

XVIII

OF THE UNCIVILISED NIGHT AND THE DEPARTURE TO THINGS CIVILISED. SHOWING HOW A FRIEND MAY KEEP AN APPOINTMENT TOO WELL.

"Let us go hence my songs, she will not hear. Let us go hence together without fear." But Ram Baksh the irrepressible sang it in altogether a baser key. He came by night to the pavilion on the lake, while the sepoys were cooking their fish, and reiterated his whine about the devildom of the country into which the Englishman had dragged him. Padre Martum Sahib would never have thus treated the owner of sixteen horses, all fast and big ones, and eight superior "shutin-tongas." "Let us get away," said Ram Baksh. "You are not here for *shikar*, and the water is very bad." It was indeed, except when taken from the lake, and then it only tasted fishy. "We will go, Ram Baksh," said the Englishman. "We will go in the very early morning, and in the meantime here is fish to stay your stomach with."

When a transparent piece of canvas, which fails by three feet to reach ceiling or floor, is the only bar between the East and the West, he would be a churl indeed who stood upon invidious race distinctions. The Englishman went out and fraternised with the Military — the four-rupee soldiers of Boondi who guarded him. They were armed, one with an old Tower musket crazy

as to nipple and hammer, one with a native-made smooth-bore, and one with a composite contrivance — English sporting muzzle-loader stock with a compartment for a jointed cleaning-rod, and hammered octagonal native barrel, wire-fastened, a tuft of cotton on the foresight. All three guns were loaded, and the owners were very proud of them. They were simple folk, these men-at-arms, with an inordinate appetite for broiled fish. They were not *always* soldiers they explained. They cultivated their crops until called for any duty that might turn up. They were paid now and again, at intervals, but they were paid in coin and not in kind.

The *munshis* and the vakils and the runners had departed after seeing that the Englishman was safe for the night, so the freedom of the little gathering on the bund was unrestrained. The *chowkidar* came out of his cave into the firelight. He took a fish and incontinently choked, for he was a feeble old man. Set right again, he launched into a very long and quite unintelligible story while the sepoys said reverently: "He is an old man and remembers many things." As he babbled, the night shut in upon the lake and the valley of Boondi. The last cows were driven into the water for their evening drink, the waterfowl and the monkeys went to bed, and the stars came out and made a new firmament in the untroubled bosom of the lake. The light of the fire showed the ruled lines of the bund springing out of the soft darkness of the wooded hill on the left and disappearing into the solid darkness of a bare hill on the right. Below the bund a man cried aloud to keep wandering pigs from the gardens whose tree-tops rose to a level with the bund-edge. Beyond the trees all was

swaddled in gloom. When the gentle buzz of the unseen city died out, it seemed as though the bund were the very Swordwide Bridge that runs, as every one knows, between this world and the next. The water lapped and muttered, and now and again a fish jumped, with the shatter of broken glass, blurring the peace of the reflected heavens.

> "And duller should I be than some fat weed
> That rolls itself at ease on Lethe's wharf."

The poet who wrote those lines knew nothing whatever of Lethe's wharf. The Englishman had found it, and it seemed to him, at that hour and in that place, that it would be good and desirable never to return to the Commissioners and the Deputy Commissioners any more, but to lie at ease on the warm sunlit bund by day, and, at night, near a shadow-breeding fire, to listen for the strangled voices and whispers of the darkness in the hills. Thus after as long a life as the *chowkidar's*, dying easily and pleasantly, and being buried in a red tomb on the borders of the lake. Surely no one would come to reclaim him, across those weary, weary miles of rock-strewn road. . . . "And this," said the *chowkidar*, raising his voice to enforce attention, "is true talk. Everybody knows it, and now the Sahib knows it. I am an old man." He fell asleep at once, with his head on the clay pipe that was doing duty for a whole *huqa* among the company. He had been talking for nearly a quarter of an hour.

See how great a man is the true novelist! Six or seven thousand miles away, Walter Besant of the Golden Pen had created Mr. Maliphant — the ancient of figure-

heads in the *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*, and here, in Boondi, the Englishman had found Mr. Maliphant in the withered flesh. So he drank Walter Besant's health in the water of the Burra Talao. One of the sepoys turned himself round, with a clatter of accoutrements, shifted his blanket under his elbow, and told a tale. It had something to do with his *khet*, and a *gunna* which certainly was not sugar-cane. It was elusive. At times it seemed that it was a woman, then changed to a right of way, and lastly appeared to be a tax; but the more he attempted to get at its meaning through the curious patois in which its doings or its merits were enveloped, the more dazed the Englishman became. None the less the story was a fine one, embellished with much dramatic gesture which told powerfully against the firelight. Then the second sepoy, who had been enjoying the pipe all the time, told a tale, the purport of which was that the dead in the tombs round the lake were wont to get up of nights and go hunting. This was a fine and ghostly story; and its dismal effect was much heightened by some clamour of the night far up the lake beyond the floor of stars.

The third sepoy said nothing. He had eaten too much fish and was fast asleep by the side of the *chowkidar*.

They were all Mahometans, and consequently all easy to deal with. A Hindu is an excellent person, but . . . but . . . there is no knowing what is in his heart, and he is hedged about with so many strange observances.

This Hindu or Musalman bent, which each Englishman's mind must take before he has been three years in the country, is, of course, influenced by Province

or Presidency. In Rajputana generally, the Political swears by the Hindu, and holds that the Mahometan is untrustworthy. But a man who will eat with you and take your tobacco, sinking the fiction that it has been doctored with infidel wines, cannot be very bad after all.

That night when the tales were all told and the guard, bless them, were snoring peaceably in the starlight, a man came stealthily into the enclosure of canvas and woke the Englishman, muttering "Sahib, Sahib," in his ear. It was no robber but some poor devil with a petition — a grimy, welted paper. He was absolutely unintelligible, and stammered almost to dumbness. He stood by the bed, alternately bowing to the earth and standing erect, his arms spread aloft, and his whole body working as he tried to force out some rebellious word in a key that should not wake the men without. What could the Englishman do? He was no Government servant, and had no concern with petitions. The man clicked and choked and gasped in his desperate desire to make the Sahib understand. But it was no use; and in the end he departed as he had come — bowed, abject, and unintelligible.

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Let every word written against Ganesh be rescinded. It was by his ordering that the Englishman saw such a dawn on the Burra Talao as he had never before set eyes on. Every fair morning is a reprint, blurred perhaps, of the First Day; but this splendour was a thing to be put aside from all other days and remembered. The stars had no fire in them and the fish had stopped jumping, when the black water of the lake paled

and grew grey. While he watched it seemed to the Englishman that voices on the hills were intoning the first verses of Genesis. The grey light moved on the face of the waters till, with no interval, a blood-red glare shot up from the horizon and, inky black against the intense red, a giant crane floated out towards the sun. In the still-shadowed city the great Palace Drum boomed and throbbed to show that the gates were open, while the dawn swept up the valley and made all things clear. The blind man who said, "The blast of a trumpet is red," spoke only the truth. The breaking of the red dawn is like the blast of a trumpet.

"What," said the *chowkidar*, picking the ashes of the overnight fire out of his beard, "what, I say, are five eggs or twelve eggs to such a Raj as ours? What also are fowls — what are" . . . "There was no talk of fowls. Where is the fowl-man from whom you got the eggs?" "He is here. No, he is there. I do not know. I am an old man, and I and the Raj supply everything without price. The fowl-man will be paid by the State — liberally paid. Let the Sahib be happy. *Wah. Wah.*"

Experience of forced labour in Himalayan villages had made the Englishman very tender in raising supplies that were given gratis; but the fowl-man could not be found, and the value of his wares was, later, paid to Ganesh — Ganesh of Situr, for that is the name of the village full of priests, through which the Englishman had passed in ignorance two days before. A double handful of sweet smelling flowers made the receipt.

Boondi was wide-awake before half-past seven in the

morning. Her hunters, on foot and on horse, were filing towards the Deoli Gate. They would hunt tiger and deer they said, even with matchlocks and muzzle loaders as uncouth as those the Sahib saw. They were a merry company and chaffed the Quarter-Guard at the gate unmercifully when a bullock-cart, laden with the cases of the "Batoum Naphtha and Oil Company" blocked the road. One of them had been a soldier of the Queen, and, excited by the appearance of a Sahib, did so rebuke and badger the Quarter-Guard for their slovenliness that they threatened to come out of the barracks and destroy him.

So, after one last look at the Palace high up the hillside, the Englishman was borne away along the Deoli Road. The peculiarity of Boondi is the peculiarity of the covered pitfall. One does not see it till one falls into it. A quarter of a mile from the gate, town and Palace were invisible. But the Englishman was grieved at heart. He had fallen in love with Boondi the beautiful, and believed that he would never again see anything half so fair. The utter untouchedness of the town was one-half the charm and its association the other. Read Tod, who is far too good to be chipped or sampled ; read Tod luxuriously on the bund of the Burra Talao, and the spirit of the place will enter into you and you will be happy.

To enjoy life thoroughly, haste and bustle must be abandoned. Ram Baksh has said that Englishmen are always bothering to go forward, and for this reason, though beyond doubt they pay well and readily, are not wise men. He gave utterance to this philosophy after he had mistaken his road and pulled up in what must have

been a disused quarry hard by a cane-field. There were patches and pockets of cultivation along the rocky road, where men grew cotton, chillies, tobacco, and sugar-cane. "I will get you sugar-cane," said Ram Baksh. "Then we will go forward, and perhaps some of these jungly-fools will tell us where the road is." A "jungly fool," a tender of goats, did in time appear, but there was no hurry; the sugar-cane was sweet and purple and the sun warm.

The Englishman lay out at high noon on the crest of a rolling upland crowned with rock, and heard, as a loafer had told him he would hear, the "set of the day," which is as easily discernible as the change of tone between the rising and the falling tide. At a certain hour the impetus of the morning dies out, and all things, living and inanimate, turn their thoughts to the prophecy of the coming night. The little wandering breezes drop for a time, and, when they blow afresh, bring the message. The "set of the day," as the loafer said, has changed, the machinery is beginning to run down, the unseen tides of the air are falling. This moment of change can only be felt in the open and in touch with the earth, and once discovered, seems to place the finder in deep accord and fellowship with all things on earth. Perhaps this is why the genuine loafer, though "frequently drunk," is "always polite to the stranger," and shows such a genial tolerance towards the weaknesses of mankind, black, white, or brown.

In the evening when the jackals were scuttling across the roads and the cranes had gone to roost, came Deoli the desolate, and an unpleasant meeting. Six days away from his kind had bred in a Cockney heart a

great desire to see a fellow-subject. An elaborate loaf through the cantonment — fifteen minutes' walk from end to end — showed only one distant dog-cart and a small English child with an ayah. There was grass in the soldierly straight roads, and some of the cross-cuts had never been used at all since the days when the cantonment had been first laid out. In the western corner lay the cemetery — the only carefully tended and newly whitewashed thing in this God-forgotten place. Some years ago a man had said good-by to the Englishman; adding cheerily: "We shall meet again. The world's a very little place y' know."

His prophecy was a true one, for the two met indeed, but the prophet was lying in Deoli Cemetery near the well, which is decorated so ecclesiastically with funeral urns.

XIX

COMES BACK TO THE RAILWAY, AFTER REFLECTIONS ON THE MANAGEMENT OF THE EMPIRE; AND SO HOME AGAIN, WITH APOLOGY TO ALL WHO HAVE READ THUS FAR.

In the morning the tonga rattled past Deoli Cemetery into the open, where the Deoli Irregulars were drilling. They marked the beginning of civilisation and white shirts; and so they seemed altogether detestable. Yet another day's jolting, enlivened by the philosophy of Ram Baksh, and then came Nasirabad. The last pair of ponies suggested serious thought. They had covered eighteen miles at an average speed of eight miles an hour, and were well-conditioned little rats. "A Colonel Sahib gave me this one for a present," said Ram Baksh, flicking the near one. "It was his child's pony. The child was five years old. When he went away, the Colonel Sahib said: "Ram Baksh, you are a good man. Never have I seen such a good man. This horse is yours." Ram Baksh was getting a horse's work out of a child's pony. Surely we in India work the land much as the Colonel Sahib worked his son's mount; making it do child's work when so much more can be screwed out of it. A native and a native State deals otherwise with horse and holding. Perhaps our extreme scrupulousness in handling may be statecraft, but, after

even a short sojourn in places which are dealt with not so tenderly, it seems absurd. There are States where things are done, and done without protest, that would make the hair of the educated native stand on end with horror. These things are of course not expedient to write; because their publication would give a great deal of unnecessary pain and heart-searching to estimable native administrators who have the hope of a Star before their eyes and would not better matters in the least.

Note this fact though. With the exception of such journals as, occupying a central position in British territory, levy blackmail from the neighbouring States, there are no independent papers in Rajputana. A King may start a weekly, to encourage a taste for Sanskrit and high Hindi, or a Prince may create a Court Chronicle; but that is all. A "free press" is not allowed, and this the native journalist knows. With good management he can, keeping under the shadow of our flag, raise two hundred rupees from a big man here, and five hundred from a rich man there, but he does not establish himself across the Border. To one who has reason to hold a stubborn disbelief in even the elementary morality of the native press, this bashfulness and lack of enterprise is amusing. But to return to the native States' administrations. There is nothing exactly wrong in the methods of government that are overlaid with English terms and forms. They are vigorous, in certain points; and where they are not vigorous, there is a cheery happy-go-luckiness about the arrangement that must be seen to be understood. The shift and play of a man's fortune across the Border is as sudden as anything in the days of Haroun-al-Raschid of blessed memory, and there are

stories, to be got for the unearthing, as wild and as improbable as those in the *Thousand and One Nights.* Most impressive of all is the way in which the country is "used," and its elasticity under pressure. In the good old days the Durbar raised everything it could from the people, and the King spent as much as ever he could on his personal pleasures. Now the institution of the Political agent has stopped the grabbing, for which, by the way, some of the monarchs are not in the least grateful — and smoothed the outward face of things. But there is still a difference, between our ways and the ways of the other places. A year spent among native States ought to send a man back to the Decencies and the Law Courts and the Rights of the Subject with a supreme contempt for those who rave about the oppressions of our brutal bureaucracy. One month nearly taught an average Englishman that it was the proper thing to smite anybody of mean aspect and obstructive tendencies on the mouth with a shoe. Hear what an intelligent loafer said. His words are at least as valuable as these babblings. He was, as usual, wonderfully drunk, and the gift of speech came upon him. The conversation — he was a great politician, this loafer — had turned on the poverty of India. "Poor?" said he. "Of course it's poor. Oh, yes, d—d poor. And I'm poor, an' you're poor, altogether. Do you expect people will give you money without you ask 'em? No, I tell you, Sir, there's enough money in India to pave Hell with if you could only get at it. I've kep' servants in my day. Did they ever leave me without a hundred or a hundred and fifty rupees put by — and never touched? You mark that. Does any black man

who had been in Guv'ment service go away without hundreds an' hundreds put by, and never touched? You mark that. Money? The place stinks o' money — just kept out o' sight. Do you ever know a native that didn't say *Garib admi* (I'm a poor man)? They've been sayin' *Garib admi* so long that the Guv'ment learns to believe 'em, and now they're all bein' treated as though they was paupers. I'm a pauper, an' you're a pauper — *we* 'aven't got anything hid in the ground — an' so's every white man in this forsaken country. But the Injian he's a rich man. How do I know? Because I've tramped on foot, or warrant pretty well from one end of the place to the other, an' I know what I'm talkin' about, and this 'ere Guv'ment goes peckin' an' fiddlin' over its tuppenny-ha'penny little taxes as if it was afraid. Which it is. You see how they do things in ——. It's six sowars here, and ten sowars there, and — 'Pay up, you brutes, or we'll pull your ears over your head.' And when they've taken all they can get, the headman, he says: 'This is a dashed poor yield. I'll come again.' *Of course* the people digs up something out of the ground, and they pay. I know the way it's done, and that's the way to do it. You can't go to an Injian an' say: 'Look here. Can you pay me five rupees?' He says: '*Garib admi,*' of course, an' would say it if he was as rich as banker. But if you send half a dozen swords at him and shift the thatch off of his roof, he'll pay. Guv'ment can't do that. I don't suppose it could. There is no reason why it shouldn't. But it might do something like it, to show that it wasn't going to have no nonsense. Why, I'd undertake to raise a hundred million — what am I

talking of? — a hundred and fifty million pounds from this country *per annum*, and it wouldn't be strained *then*. One hundred and fifty millions you could raise as easy as paint, if you just made these 'ere Injians understand that they had to pay an' make no bones about it. It's enough to make a man sick to go in over yonder to —— and see what they do; and then come back an' see what we do. Perfectly sickenin' it is. Borrer money? Why the country could pay herself an' everything she wants, if she was only made to do it. It's this blooomin' *Garib admi* swindle that's been going on all these years, that has made fools o' the Guv'ment."

Then he became egotistical, this ragged ruffian who conceived that he knew the road to illimitable wealth and told the story of his life, interspersed with anecdotes that would blister the paper they were written on. But through all his ravings, he stuck to his hundred-and-fifty-million theory, and though the listener dissented from him and the brutal cruelty with which his views were stated, an unscientific impression remained not to be shaken off. Across the Border one feels that the country is being used, exploited, "made to sit up," so to speak. In our territories the feeling is equally strong of wealth "just round the corner," as the loafer said, of a people wrapped up in cotton wool and ungetatable. Will any man, who really knows something of a little piece of India and has not the fear of running counter to custom before his eyes, explain how this impression is produced, and why it is an erroneous one?

Nasirabad marked the end of the Englishman's holiday, and there was sorrow in his heart. "Come back

again," said Ram Baksh, cheerfully, "and bring a gun with you. Then I'll take you to Gungra, and I'll drive you myself. 'Drive you just as well as I've driven these four days past." An amicable open-minded soul was Ram Baksh. May his tongas never grow less!

* * * * * * *

"This 'ere Burma fever is a bad thing to have. It's pulled me down awful; an' now I am going to Peshawar. Are you the Station-master?" It was Thomas — white-cheeked, sunken-eyed, drawn-mouthed Thomas — travelling from Nasirabad to Peshawar on pass; and with him was a Corporal new to his stripes and doing station duty. Every Thomas is interesting, except when he is too drunk to speak. This Thomas was an enthusiast. He had volunteered, from a Home-going regiment shattered by Burma fever, into a regiment at Peshawar, had broken down at Nasirabad on his way up with his draft, and was now journeying into the unknown to pick up another medal. "There's sure to be something on the Frontier," said this gaunt, haggard boy — he was little more, though he reckoned four years' service and considered himself somebody. "When there's anything going, Peshawar's the place to be in, they tell me; but I hear we shall have to march down to Calcutta in no time." The Corporal was a little man and showed his friend off with great pride: "Ah, you should have come to *us*," said he; "we're the regiment, we are." "Well, I went with the rest of our men," said Thomas. "There's three hundred of us volunteered to stay on, and we all went for the same regiment. Not but what I'm saying yours is a good regiment," he added with grave courtesy. This

loosed the Corporal's tongue, and he descanted on the virtues of the regiment and the merits of the officers. It has been written that Thomas is devoid of *esprit de corps*, because of the jerkiness of the arrangements under which he now serves. If this be true, he manages to conceal his feelings very well; for he speaks most fluently in praise of his own regiment; and, for all his youth, has a keen appreciation of the merits of his officers. Go to him when his heart is opened, and hear him going through the roll of the subalterns, by a grading totally unknown in the Army List, and you will pick up something worth the hearing. Thomas, with the Burma fever on him, tried to cut in, from time to time, with stories of his officers and what they had done "when we was marchin' all up and down Burma," but the little Corporal went on gayly.

They made a curious contrast — these two types. The lathy, town-bred Thomas with hock-bottle shoulders, a little education, and a keen desire to get more medals and stripes; and the little, deep-chested, bull-necked Corporal brimming over with vitality and devoid of any ideas beyond the "regiment." And the end of both lives, in all likelihood, would be a nameless grave in some cantonment burying-ground with, if the case were specially interesting and the Regimental Doctor had a turn for the pen, an obituary notice in the Indian Medical Journal. It was an unpleasant thought.

From the Army to the Navy is a perfectly natural transition, but one hardly to be expected in the heart of India. Dawn showed the railway carriage full of riotous boys, for the Agra and Mount Abu schools had broken up for holidays. Surely it was natural enough to ask a

child — not a boy, but a child — whether he was going home for the holidays; and surely it was a crushing, a petrifying thing to hear in a clear treble tinged with icy scorn: "No. I'm on leave. I'm a midshipman." Two "officers of Her Majesty's Navy" — mids of a man-o'-war at Bombay — were going up-country on ten days' leave. They had not travelled much more than twice round the world; but they should have printed the fact on a label. They chattered like daws, and their talk was as a whiff of fresh air from the open sea, while the train ran eastward under the Aravalis. At that hour their lives were bound up in and made glorious by the hope of riding a horse when they reached their journey's end. Much had they seen "cities and men," and the artless way in which they interlarded their conversation with allusions to "one of those shore-going chaps, you see," was delicious. They had no cares, no fears, no servants, and an unlimited stock of wonder and admiration for everything they saw, from the "cute little well-scoops" to a herd of deer grazing on the horizon. It was not until they had opened their young hearts with infantile abandon that the listener could guess from the incidental *argot* where these pocket-Ulysseses had travelled. South African, Norwegian, and Arabian words were used to help out the slang of shipboard, and a copious vocabulary of shipboard terms, complicated with modern Greek. As free from self-consciousness as children, as ignorant as beings from another planet of the Anglo-Indian life into which they were going to dip for a few days, shrewd and observant as befits men of the world who have authority, and neat-handed and resourceful as — blue-jackets, they were a delightful study, and ac-

cepted freely and frankly the elaborate apologies tendered to them for the unfortunate mistake about the "holidays." The roads divided and they went their way; and there was a shadow after they had gone, for the Globe-trotter said to his wife, "What I like about Jeypore" — accent on the first syllable, if you please — "is its characteristic easternness." And the Globe-trotter's wife said: "Yes. It is purely Oriental."

This was Jeypore with the gas-jets and the water-pipes as was shown at the beginning of these trivial letters; and the Globe-trotter and his wife had not been to Amber. Joyful thought! They had not seen the soft splendours of Udaipur, the nightmare of Chitor, the grim power of Jodhpur, and the virgin beauties of Boondi — fairest of all places that the Englishman had set eyes on. The Globe-trotter was great in the matter of hotels and food, but he had not lain under the shadow of a tonga in soft warm sand, eating cold pork with a pocket-knife, and thanking Providence who put sweet-water streams where wayfarers wanted them. He had not drunk out the brilliant cold-weather night in the company of a King of Loafers, a grimy scallawag with a six days' beard and an unholy knowledge of native States. He had attended service in cantonment churches; but he had not known what it was to witness the simple, solemn ceremonial in the dining room of a far-away Residency, when all the English folk within a hundred-mile circuit bowed their heads before the God of the Christians. He had blundered about temples of strange deities with a guide at his elbow; but he had not known what it was to attempt conversation with a temple dancing-girl (*not* such an one as Edwin Arnold invented),

and to be rewarded for a misturned compliment with a deftly heaved bunch of marigold buds in his respectable bosom. Yet he had undoubtedly lost much, and the measure of his loss was proven in his estimate of the Orientalism of Jeypore.

But what had he who sat in judgment upon him gained? One perfect month of loaferdom, to be remembered above all others and the night of the visit to Chitor, to be remembered even when the month is forgotten. Also the sad knowledge that of all the fair things seen, the inept pen gives but a feeble and blurred picture.

Let those who have read to the end, pardon a hundred blemishes.

FROM SEA TO SEA

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MARCH–SEPTEMBER, 1889

No. I

OF FREEDOM AND THE NECESSITY OF USING HER. THE MOTIVE AND THE SCHEME THAT WILL COME TO NOTHING. A DISQUISITION UPON THE OTHERNESS OF THINGS AND THE TORMENTS OF THE DAMNED.

When all the world is young, lad,
And all the trees are green,
And every goose a swan, lad,
And every lass a queen, —
Then hey for boot and horse, lad,
And o'er the world away —
Young blood must have its course, lad,
And every dog its day.

AFTER seven years it pleased Necessity, whom we all serve, to turn to me and say: "Now you need do Nothing Whatever. You are free to enjoy yourself. I will take the yoke of bondage from your neck for one year. What do you choose to do with my gift?" And I considered the matter in several lights. At first I held notions of regenerating Society; but it appeared that this would demand more than a year, and perhaps Society would not be grateful after all. Then I would fain enter upon one monumental "bust"; but I reflected that this at the outside could endure but three months, while the

headache would last for nine. Then came by the person that I most hate,—a Globe-trotter. He, sitting in my chair, discussed India with the unbridled arrogance of five weeks on a Cook's ticket. He was from England and had dropped his manners in the Suez Canal. "I assure you," said he, "that you who live so close to the actual facts of things cannot form dispassionate judgments of their merits. You are too near. Now I—" he waved his hand modestly and left me to fill the gaps.

I considered him, from his new helmet to his deck-shoes, and I perceived that he was but an ordinary man. I thought of India, maligned and silent India, given up to the ill-considered wanderings of such as he—of the land whose people are too busy to reply to the libels upon their life and manners. It was my destiny to avenge India upon nothing less than three-quarters of the world. The idea necessitated sacrifices,—painful sacrifices,—for I had to become a Globe-trotter, with a helmet and deck-shoes. In the interests of our little world I would endure these things and more. I would deliver "brawling judgments all day long; on all things unashamed." I would go toward the rising sun till I reached the heart of the world and once more smelt London asphalt.

The Indian public never gave me a brief. I took it, appointing myself Commissioner in General for Our Own Sweet Selves. Then all the aspects of life changed, as, they say, the appearance of his room grows strange to a dying man when he sees it upon the last morning, and knows that it will confront him no more. I had wilfully stepped aside from the current of our existence, and had no part in any of Our interests. Up-country the

peach was beginning to bud, and men said that by cause of the heavy snows in the Hills the hot weather would be a short one. That was nothing to me. The punkahs and their pullers sat together in the verandah, and the public buildings spawned thermantidotes. The coppersmith sang in the garden and the early wasp hummed low down by the door-handle, and they prophesied of the hot weather to come. These things were no concern of mine. I was dead, and looked upon the old life as a dead man — without interest and without concern.

It was a strange life; I had lived it for seven years or one day, I could not be certain which. All that I knew was that I could watch men going to their offices, while I slept luxuriously; could go out at any hour of the day and sit up to any hour of the night, secure that each morning would bring no toil. I understood with what emotions the freed convict regards the prison he has quitted — insight which had hitherto been denied me; and I further saw how intense is the selfishness of the irresponsible man. Some said that the coming year would be one of scarcity and distress because unseasonable rains were falling. I was grieved. I feared that the Rains might break the railway line to the sea, and so delay my departure. Again, the season would be a sickly one. I fancied that Necessity might repent of her gift and for mere jest wipe me off the face of the earth ere I had seen anything of what lay upon it. There was trouble on the Afghan frontier; perhaps an army-corps would be mobilised, and perhaps many men would die, leaving folk to mourn for them at the hill-stations. My dread was that a Russian man-of-war might intercept the steamer which carried my precious

self between Yokohama and San Francisco. Let Armageddon be postponed, I prayed, for my sake, that my personal enjoyments may not be interfered with. War, famine, and pestilence would be so inconvenient to me. And I abased myself before Necessity, the great Goddess, and said ostentatiously: "It is naught, it is naught, and you needn't look at me when I wander about." Surely we are only virtuous by compulsion of earning our daily bread.

So I looked upon men with new eyes, and pitied them very much indeed. They worked. They had to. I was an aristocrat. I could call upon them at inconvenient hours and ask them why they worked, and whether they did it often. Then they grunted, and the envy in their eyes was a delight to me. I dared not, however, mock them too pointedly, lest Necessity should drag me back by the collar to take my still warm place by their side. When I had disgusted all who knew me, I fled to Calcutta, which, I was pained to see, still persisted in being a city and transacting commerce after I had formally cursed it one year ago. That curse I now repeat, in the hope that the unsavoury capital will collapse. One must begin to smoke at five in the morning — which is neither night nor day — on coming across the Howrah Bridge, for it is better to get a headache from honest nicotine than to be poisoned by evil smells. And a man, who otherwise was a nice man, though he worked with his hands and his head, asked me why the scandal of the Simla Exodus was allowed to continue. To him I made answer: "It is because this sewer is unfit for human habitation. It is because you are all one gigantic mistake,— you and your monuments and your

merchants and everything about you. I rejoice to think that scores of lakhs of rupees have been spent on public offices at a place called Simla, that scores and scores will be spent on the Delhi-Kalka line, in order that civilised people may go there in comfort. When that line is opened, your big city will be dead and buried and done with, and I hope it will teach you a lesson. Your city will rot, Sir." And he said: "When people are buried here, they turn into adipocere in five days if the weather is rainy. They saponify, you know." I said: "Go and saponify, for I hate Calcutta." But he took me to the Eden Gardens instead, and begged me for my own sake not to go round the world in this prejudiced spirit. I was unhappy and ill, but he vowed that my spleen was due to my "Simla way of looking at things."

All this world of ours knows something about the Eden Gardens, which are supposed by the uninitiated of the mofussil to represent the gilded luxury of the metropolis. As a matter of fact they are hideously dull. The inhabitants appear in top-hats and frock-coats, and walk dolorously to and fro under the glare of jerking electric lamps, when they ought to be sitting in their shirt-sleeves round little tables and treating their wives to iced lager beer. My friend — it was a muggy March night — wrapped himself in the prescribed garments and said graciously: "You can wear a round hat, but you mustn't wear deck-shoes; and for goodness' sake, my dear fellow, don't smoke on the Red Road — all the people one knows go there." Most of the people who were people sat in their carriages, in an atmosphere of hot horse, harness, and panel-lacquer, outside the gardens, and the remnant tramped up and

down, by twos and threes, upon squashy green grass, until they were wearied, while a band played at them. "And is this all you do?" I asked. "It is," said my friend. "Isn't it good enough? We meet every one we know here, and walk with him or her, unless he or she is among the carriages."

Overhead was a woolly warm sky; underfoot feverish soft grass; and from all quarters the languorous breeze bore faint reminiscences of stale sewage upon its wings. Round the horizon were stacked lines of carriages, and the electric flare bred aches in the strained eyebrow. It was a strange sight and fascinating. The doomed creatures walked up and down without cessation, for when one fled away into the lamp-spangled gloom twenty came to take his place. Slop-hatted members of the mercantile marine, Armenian merchants, Bengal civilians, shop-girls and shop-men, Jews, Parthians, and Mesopotamians, were all there in the tepid heat and the fetid smell.

"This," said my friend, "is how we enjoy ourselves. There are the Viceregal liveries. Lady Lansdowne comes here." He spoke as though reading to me the Government House list of Paradise. I reflected that these people would continue to walk up and down until they died, drinkless, dusty, sad, and blanched.

In saying this last thing I had made a mistake. Calcutta is no more Anglo-Indian than West Brompton. In common with Bombay, it has achieved a mental attitude several decades in advance of that of the raw and brutal India of fact. An intelligent and responsible financier, discussing the Empire, said: "But why do we want so large an army in India? Look at the country all about."

I think he meant as far as the Circular Road or perhaps Raneegunge. Some of these days, when the voice of the two uncomprehending cities carries to London, and its advice is acted upon, there will be trouble. Till this second journey to Calcutta I was unable to account for the acid tone and limited range of the Presidency journals. I see now that they are ward papers and ought to be treated as such.

In the fulness of time — there was no hurry — imagine that, O you toilers of the land — I took ship and fled from Calcutta by that which they call the Mutton-Mail, because it takes sheep and correspondence to Rangoon. Half the Punjab was going with us to serve the Queen in the Burma Military Police, and it was grateful to catch once more the raw, rasping up-country speech amid the jabber of Burmese and Bengali.

To Rangoon, then, aboard the *Madura*, come with me down the Hughli, and try to understand what sort of life is led by the pilots, those strange men who only seem to know the land by watching it from the river.

"And I fetched up under the north ridge with six inches o' water under me, with a sou'west monsoon blowing, an' me not knowing any more than the dead where in — Paradise — I was taking her," says one deep voice.

"Well, what do you expect?" says another. "They ought not all to be occulting lights. Give me a red with two flashes for outlying danger anyhow. The Hughli's the worst river in the world. Why, off the Lower Gasper only last year . . . "

"And look at the way Government treats you!"

The Hughli pilot is human. He may talk Greek in

the exercise of his profession, but he can unite at swearing at the Government as thoroughly as though he were an uncovenanted civilian. His life is a hard one; but he is full of strange stories, and when treated with proper respect may condescend to tell some of them. If he has served on the river for six years as a "cub," and is neither dead nor decrepit, I believe he can earn as much as fifty rupees by sending two thousand tons of ship and a few hundred souls flying down the reaches at twelve miles an hour. Then he drops over the side with your last love-letters and wanders about the estuary in a tug until he finds another steamer and brings her up. It does not take much to comfort him.

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Somewhere in the open sea some days later. I give it up. I *cannot* write, and to sleep I am not ashamed. A glorious idleness has taken entire possession of me; journalism is an imposture; so is Literature; so is Art. All India dropped out of sight yesterday, and the rocking pilot-brig at the Sandheads bore my last message to the prison that I quit. We have reached blue water — crushed sapphire — and a little breeze is bellying the awning. Three flying-fish were sighted this morning; the tea at *chota-hazri* is not nice, but the captain is excellent. Is this budget of news sufficiently exciting, or must I in strict confidence tell you the story of the Professor and the compass? You will hear more about the Professor later, if, indeed, I ever touch pen again. When he was in India he worked about nine hours a day. At noon to-day he conceived an interest in cyclones and things of that kind — would go to his cabin to get

a compass and a meteorological book. He went, but stopped to reflect by the brink of a drink. "The compass is in a box," said he, drowsily, "but the nuisance of it is that to get it I shall have to pull the box out from under my berth. All things considered, I don't think it's worth while." He loafed on deck, and I think by this time is fast asleep. There was no trace of shame in his voice for his mighty sloth. I would have reproved him, but the words died on my tongue. I was guiltier than he.

"Professor," said I, "there is a foolish little paper in Allahabad called the *Pioneer*. I am supposed to be writing it a letter — a letter with my hands! Did you ever hear of anything so absurd?"

"I wonder if Angostura bitters really go with whisky," said the Professor, toying with the neck of the bottle.

There is no such place as India; there never was a daily paper called the *Pioneer*. It was all a weary dream. The only real things in the world are crystal seas, clean-swept decks, soft rugs, warm sunshine, the smell of salt in the air, and fathomless, futile indolence.

No. II

THE RIVER OF THE LOST FOOTSTEPS AND THE GOLDEN MYSTERY UPON ITS BANKS. THE INIQUITY OF JORDAN. SHOWS HOW A MAN MAY GO TO THE SHWAY DAGON PAGODA AND SEE IT NOT AND TO THE PEGU CLUB AND HEAR TOO MUCH. A DISSERTATION ON MIXED DRINKS.

> "I am a part of all that I have met,
> Yet all experience is an arch where through
> Gleams that untravelled world whose margin fades
> For ever and for ever when I move."

THERE was a river and a bar, a pilot and a great deal of nautical mystery, and the Captain said the journey from Calcutta was ended and that we should be in Rangoon in a few hours. It is not an impressive stream, being low-banked, scrubby, and muddy; but as we gave the staggering rice-boats the go-by, I reflected that I was looking upon the River of the Lost Footsteps — the road that so many, many men of my acquaintance had travelled, never to return, within the past three years. Such a one had gone up to open out Upper Burma, and had himself been opened out by a Burmese dah in the cruel scrub beyond Minhla; such another had gone to rule the land in the Queen's name, but could not rule a hill stream and was carried down under his horse. One had been shot by his servant; another by a dacoit while he sat at dinner; and a pitifully long list had found in jungle-

fever their sole reward for "the difficulties and privations inseparably connected with military service," as the Bengal Army Regulations put it. I ran over half a score of names — policemen, subalterns, young civilians, employés of big trading firms, and adventurers. They had gone up the river and they had died. At my elbow stood one of the workers in New Burma, going to report himself at Rangoon, and he told tales of interminable chases after evasive dacoits, of marchings and countermarchings that came to nothing, and of deaths in the wilderness as noble as they were sad.

Then, a golden mystery upheaved itself on the horizon — a beautiful winking wonder that blazed in the sun, of a shape that was neither Muslim dome nor Hindu temple spire. It stood upon a green knoll, and below it were lines of warehouses, sheds, and mills. Under what new god, thought I, are we irrepressible English sitting now?

"There's the old Shway Dagon" (pronounced Dagone, *not* like the god in the Scriptures), said my companion. "Confound it!" But it was not a thing to be sworn at. It explained in the first place why we took Rangoon, and in the second why we pushed on to see what more of rich or rare the land held. Up till that sight my uninstructed eyes could not see that the land differed much in appearance from the Sunderbuns, but the golden dome said: "This is Burma, and it will be quite unlike any land you know about." "It's a famous old shrine o' sorts," said my companion, "and now the Tounghoo-Mandalay line is open, pilgrims are flocking down by the thousand to see it. It lost its big gold top — 'thing that they call a *'htee* — in an earthquake: that's why it's all hidden by bamboo-

work for a third of its height. You should see it when it's all uncovered. They're regilding it now."

Why is it that when one views for the first time any of the wonders of the earth a bystander always strikes in with, "You should see it, etc."? Such men given twenty minutes from the tomb at the Day of Judgment, would patronize the naked souls as they hurried up with the glare of Tophet on their faces, and say: "You should have seen this when Gabriel first began to blow." What the Shway Dagon really is and how many books may have been written upon its history and archæology is no part of my business. As it stood overlooking everything it seemed to explain all about Burma — why the boys had gone north and died, why the troopers bustled to and fro, and why the steamers of the Irrawaddy Flotilla lay like black-backed gulls upon the water.

Then we came to a new land, and the first thing that one of the regular residents said was: "This place isn't India at all. They ought to have made it a Crown colony." Judging the Empire as it ought to be judged, by its most prominent points — *videlicet*, its smells — he was right; for though there is one stink in Calcutta, another in Bombay, and a third and most pungent one in the Punjab, yet they have a kinship of stinks, whereas Burma smells quite otherwise. It is not exactly what China ought to smell like, but it is not India. "What is it?" I asked; and the man said "*Napi*," which is fish pickled when it ought to have been buried long ago. This food, in guide-book language, is inordinately consumed by . . . but everybody who has been within downwind range of Rangoon knows what *napi* means, and those who do not will not understand.

Yes, it was a very new land — a land where the people understood colour — a delightfully lazy land full of pretty girls and very bad cheroots.

The worst of it was that the Anglo-Indian was a foreigner, a creature of no account. He did not know Burman, — which was no great loss, — and the Madrassi insisted upon addressing him in English. The Madrassi, by the way, is a great institution. He takes the place of the Burman, who will not work, and in a few years returns to his native coast with rings on his fingers and bells on his toes. The consequences are obvious. The Madrassi demands, and receives, enormous wages, and gets to know that he is indispensable. The Burman exists beautifully, while his women-folk marry the Madrassi and the Chinaman, because these support them in affluence. When the Burman wishes to work he gets a Madrassi to do it for him. How he finds the money to pay the Madrassi I was not informed, but all men were agreed in saying that under no circumstances will the Burman exert himself in the paths of honest industry. Now, if a bountiful Providence had clothed you in a purple, green, amber or puce petticoat, had thrown a rose-pink scarf-turban over your head, and had put you in a pleasant damp country where rice grew of itself and fish came up to be caught, putrified and pickled, would *you* work? Would you not rather take a cheroot and loaf about the streets seeing what was to be seen? If two-thirds of your girls were grinning, good-humoured little maidens and the remainder positively pretty, would you not spend your time in making love?

The Burman does both these things, and the Englishman, who after all worked himself to Burma, says hard

things about him. Personally I love the Burman with the blind favouritism born of first impression. When I die I will be a Burman, with twenty yards of real King's silk, that has been made in Mandalay, about my body, and a succession of cigarettes between my lips. I will wave the cigarette to emphasise my conversation, which shall be full of jest and repartee, and I will always walk about with a pretty almond-coloured girl who shall laugh and jest too, as a young maiden ought. She shall not pull a sari over her head when a man looks at her and glare suggestively from behind it, nor shall she tramp behind me when I walk: for these are the customs of India. She shall look all the world between the eyes, in honesty and good fellowship, and I will teach her not to defile her pretty mouth with chopped tobacco in a cabbage leaf, but to inhale good cigarettes of Egypt's best brand.

Seriously, the Burmese girls are very pretty, and when I saw them I understood much that I had heard about — about our army in Flanders let us say.

Providence really helps those who do not help themselves. I went up a street, name unknown, attracted by the colour that was so wantonly flashed down its length. There is colour in Rajputana and in Southern India, and you can find a whole paletteful of raw tints at any down-country durbar; but the Burmese way of colouring is different. With the women the scarf, petticoat, and jacket are of three lively hues, and with the men putso and head-wrap are gorgeous. Thus you get your colours dashed down in dots against a background of dark timber houses set in green foliage. There are no canons of art anywhere, and every scheme of colouring depends on

the power of the sun above. That is why men in a London fog do still believe in pale greens and sad reds. Give me lilac, pink, vermilion, lapis lazuli, and blistering blood red under fierce sunlight that mellows and modifies all. I had just made this discovery and was noting that the people treated their cattle kindly, when the driver of an absurd little hired carriage built to the scale of a fat Burma pony, volunteered to take me for a drive, and we drove in the direction of the English quarter of the town where the sahibs live in dainty little houses made out of the sides of cigar boxes. They looked as if they could be kicked in at a blow and (trust a Globe-trotter for evolving a theory at a minute's notice) it is to avoid this fate that they are built for the most part on legs. The houses are not cantonment bred in any way — nor did the uneven ground and dusty reddish roads fit in with any part of the Indian Empire except it may be Ootacamund.

The pony wandered into a garden studded with lovely little lakes which, again, were studded with islands, and there were sahibs in flannels in the boats. Outside the park were pleasant little monasteries full of clean-shaved gentlemen in gold amber robes learning to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil by chatting furiously amongst themselves, and at every corner stood the three little maids from school, almost exactly as they had been dismissed from the side scenes of the Savoy after the *Mikado* was over: and the strange part of it all was that every one laughed — laughed, so it seemed, at the sky above them because it was blue, at the sun because it was sinking, and at each other because they had nothing better to do. A small fat child laughed loudest of all, in spite

of the fact that it was smoking a cheroot that ought to have made it deathly sick. The pagoda was always close at hand — as brilliant a mystery as when first sighted far down the river; but it changed its shape as we came nearer, and showed in the middle of a nest of hundreds of smaller pagodas. There appeared suddenly two colossal tigers (after the Burmese canons) in plaster on a hillside, and they were the guardians of Burma's greatest pagoda. Round them rustled a great crowd of happy people in pretty dresses, and the feet of all were turned towards a great stoneway that ran from between the tigers even to the brow of the mound. But the nature of the stairs was peculiar. They were covered in for the most part by a tunnel, or it may have been a walled-in colonnade, for there were heavily gilt wooden pillars visible in the gloom. The afternoon was drawing on as I came to this strange place and saw that I should have to climb up a long, low hill of stairs to get to the pagoda.

Once or twice in my life I have seen a Globe-trotter literally gasping with jealous emotion because India was so much larger and more lovely than he had ever dreamed, and because he had only set aside three months to explore it in. My own sojourn in Rangoon was countable by hours, so I may be forgiven when I pranced with impatience at the bottom of the staircase because I could not at once secure a full, complete, and accurate idea of everything that was to be seen. The meaning of the guardian tigers, the inwardness of the main pagoda, and the countless little ones, was hidden from me. I could not understand why the pretty girls with cheroots sold little sticks and coloured candles to be used before the image of Buddha. Everything was

incomprehensible to me, and there was none to explain. All that I could gather was that in a few days the great golden *'htee* that has been defaced by the earthquake would be hoisted into position with feasting and song, and that half Upper Burma was coming down to see the show.

I went forward between the two great beasts, across a whitewashed court, till I came to a flat-headed arch guarded by the lame, the blind, the leper, and the deformed. These plucked at my clothes as I passed, and moaned and whined: but the stream that disappeared up the gentle slope of the stairway took no notice of them. And I stepped into the semi-darkness of a long, long corridor flanked by booths, and floored with stones worn very smooth by human feet.

At the far end of the roofed corridor there was a breadth of evening sky, and at this point rose a second and much steeper flight of stairs, leading directly to the Shwedagon (this, by the way, is its real spelling). Down this staircase fell, from gloom to deeper gloom, a cascade of colour. At this point I stayed, because there was a beautiful archway of Burmese build, and adorned with a Chinese inscription, directly in front of me, and I conceived foolishly that I should find nothing more pleasant to look at if I went farther. Also, I wished to understand how such a people could produce the dacoit of the newspaper, and I knew that a great deal of promiscuous knowledge comes to him who sits down by the wayside. Then I saw a Face — which explained a good deal. The chin, jowl, lips, and neck were modelled faithfully on the lines of the worst of the Roman Empresses — the lolloping, walloping women that Swin-

burne sings about, and that we sometimes see pictures of. Above this gross perfection of form came the Mongoloid nose, narrow forehead, and flaring pig's eyes. I stared intently, and the man stared back again, with admirable insolence, that puckered one corner of his mouth. Then he swaggered forward, and I was richer by a new face and a little knowledge. "I must make further inquiries at the Club," said I, "but that man seems to be of the proper dacoit type. He could crucify on occasion."

Then a brown baby came by in its mother's arms and laughed, wherefore I much desired to shake hands with it, and grinned to that effect. The mother held out the tiny soft pud and laughed, and the baby laughed, and we all laughed together, because that seemed to be the custom of the country, and returned down the now dark corridor where the lamps of the stall-keepers were twinkling and scores of people were helping us to laugh. They must be a mild-mannered nation, the Burmese, for they leave little three-year-olds in charge of a whole wilderness of clay dolls or a menagerie of jointed tigers.

I had not actually entered the Shwedagon, but I felt just as happy as though I had.

In the Pegu Club I found a friend — a Punjabi — upon whose broad bosom I threw myself and demanded food and entertainment. He had not long since received a visit from the Commissioner of Peshawar, of all places in the world, and was not to be upset by sudden arrivals. But he had come down in the world hideously. Years ago in the Black North he used to speak the vernacular as it should be spoken, and was one of us.

"*Daniel, how many socks master got?*"

The unfinished peg fell from my fist. "Good Heavens!" said I, "is it possible that you — you — speak that disgusting pidgin-talk to your *nauker?* It's enough to make one cry. You're no better than a Bombaywallah."

"I'm a Madrassi," said he, calmly. "We all talk English to our boys here. Isn't it beautiful? Now come along to the Gymkhana and then we'll dine here. Daniel, master's hat and stick get."

There must be a few hundred men who are fairly behind the scenes of the Burma War — one of the least known and appreciated of any of our little affairs. The Pegu Club seemed to be full of men on their way up or down, and the conversation was but an echo of the murmur of conquest far away to the north.

"See that man over there. He was cut over the head the other day at Zoungloung-goo. Awfully tough man. That chap next him has been on the dacoit-hunt for about a year. He broke up Boh Mango's gang: caught the Boh in a paddy field, y'know. The other man's going home on sick leave — got a lump of iron somewhere in his system. Try our mutton: I assure you the Club is the only place in Rangoon where you get mutton. Look here, you must *not* speak vernacular to our boys. Hi, boy! get master some more ice. They're all Bombay men or Madrassis. Up at the front there are some Burman servants: but a real Burman will never work. He prefers being a simple little *daku*."

"How much?"

"Dear little dacoit. We call 'em *dakus* for short — sort o' pet name. That's the butter-fish. I forgot you didn't get much fish up-country. Yes, I s'pose Rangoon has its advantages. You pay like a Prince. Take an

ordinary married establishment. Little furnished house — one hundred and fifty rupees. Servants' wages two twenty or two fifty. That's four hundred at once. My dear fellow, a sweeper won't take less than twelve or sixteen rupees a month here, and even then he'll work for other houses. It's worse than Quetta. Any man who comes to Lower Burma in the hope of living on his pay is a fool."

Voice from lower end of table. "Dee fool. It's different in Upper Burma, where you get command and travelling allowances."

Another voice in the middle of a conversation. "They never got that story into the papers, but I can tell you we weren't quite as quick in rushing the fort as they made believe. You see Boh Gwee had us in a regular trap, and by the time we had closed the line our men were being peppered front and rear: that jungle-fighting is the deuce and all. More ice please."

Then they told me of the death of an old school-fellow under the ramp of the Minhla redoubt — does any one remember the affair at Minhla that opened the third Burmese ball?

"I was close to him," said a voice. "He died in A.'s arms, I fancy, but I'm not quite sure. Anyhow, I know he died easily. He was a good fellow."

"Thank you," said I, "and now I think I'll go;" and I went out into the steamy night, my head ringing with stories of battle, murder, and sudden death. I had reached the fringe of the veil that hides Upper Burma, and I would have given much to have gone up the river and seen a score of old friends, now jungle-worn men of war. All that night I dreamed of interminable staircases

down which swept thousands of pretty girls, so brilliantly robed that my eyes ached at the sight. There was a great golden bell at the top of the stairs, and at the bottom, his face turned to the sky, lay poor old D—— dead at Minhla, and a host of unshaven ragamuffins in khaki were keeping guard over him.

No. III

THE CITY OF ELEPHANTS WHICH IS GOVERNED BY THE GREAT GOD OF IDLENESS, WHO LIVES ON THE TOP OF A HILL. THE HISTORY OF THREE GREAT DISCOVERIES AND THE NAUGHTY CHILDREN OF IQUIQUE.

"I built my soul a lordly pleasure-house
Wherein at ease for aye to dwell,
I said: Oh, soul, make merry and carouse,
Dear soul, for all is well."

So much for making definite programmes of travel beforehand. In my first letter I told you that I would go from Rangoon to Penang direct. Now we are lying off Moulmein in a new steamer which does not seem to run anywhere in particular. Why she should go to Moulmein is a mystery; but as every soul on the ship is a loafer like myself, no one is discontented. Imagine a shipload of people to whom time is no object, who have no desires beyond three meals a day and no emotions save those caused by a casual cockroach.

Moulmein is situated up the mouth of a river which ought to flow through South America, and all manner of dissolute native craft appear to make the place their home. Ugly cargo-steamers that the initiated call "Geordie tramps" grunt and bellow at the beautiful hills all round, and the pot-bellied British India liners wallow down the reaches. Visitors are rare in

Moulmein — so rare that few but cargo-boats think it worth their while to come off from the shore.

Strictly in confidence I will tell you that Moulmein is not a city of this earth at all. Sindbad the Sailor visited it, if you recollect, on that memorable voyage when he discovered the burial-ground of the elephants.

As the steamer came up the river we were aware of first one elephant and then another hard at work in timber-yards that faced the shore. A few narrow-minded folk with binoculars said that there were *mahouts* upon their backs, but this was never clearly proven. I prefer to believe in what I saw — a sleepy town, just one house thick, scattered along a lovely stream and inhabited by slow, solemn elephants, building stockades for their own diversion. There was a strong scent of freshly sawn teak in the air — we could not see any elephants sawing — and occasionally the warm stillness was broken by the crash of the log. When the elephants had got an appetite for luncheon they loafed off in couples to their club, and did not take the trouble to give us greeting and the latest mail papers; at which we were much disappointed, but took heart when we saw upon a hill a large white pagoda surrounded by scores of little pagodas. "This," we said with one voice, "is the place to make an excursion to," and then shuddered at our own profanity, for above all things we did not wish to behave like mere vulgar tourists.

The *ticca-gharies* at Moulmein are three sizes smaller than those of Rangoon, as the ponies are no bigger than decent sheep. Their drivers trot them uphill and down, and as the *ghari* is extremely narrow and the roads are

anything but good, the exercise is refreshing. Here again all the drivers are Madrassis.

I should better remember what that pagoda was like had I not fallen deeply and irrevocably in love with a Burmese girl at the foot of the first flight of steps. Only the fact of the steamer starting next noon prevented me from staying at Moulmein forever and owning a pair of elephants. These are so common that they wander about the streets, and, I make no doubt, could be obtained for a piece of sugar-cane.

Leaving this far too lovely maiden, I went up the steps only a few yards, and, turning me round, looked upon a view of water, island, broad river, fair grazing ground, and belted wood that made me rejoice that I was alive. The hillside below me and above me was ablaze with pagodas — from a gorgeous golden and vermilion beauty to a delicate grey stone one just completed in honour of an eminent priest lately deceased at Mandalay. Far above my head there was a faint tinkle, as of golden bells, and a talking of the breezes in the tops of the toddy-palms. Wherefore I climbed higher and higher up the steps till I reached a place of great peace, dotted with Burmese images, spotlessly clean. Here women now and again paid reverence. They bowed their heads and their lips moved, because they were praying. I had an umbrella — a black one — in my hand, deck-shoes upon my feet, and a helmet upon my head. I did not pray — I swore at myself for being a Globe-trotter, and wished that I had enough Burmese to explain to these ladies that I was sorry and would have taken off my hat but for the sun. A Globe-trotter is a brute. I had the grace to blush as I tramped round the pagoda. That

will be remembered to me for righteousness. But I stared horribly — at a gold and red side-temple with a beautifully gilt image of Buddha in it — at the grim figures in the niches at the base of the main pagoda — at the little palms that grew out of the cracks in the tiled paving of the court — at the big palms above, and at the low hung bronze bells that stood at each corner for the women to smite with stag-horns. Upon one bell rang this amazing triplet in English, evidently the composition of the caster, who completed his work — and now, let us hope, has reached Nibban — thirty-five years ago: —

> "He who destroyed this Bell
> They must be in the great Hel
> And unable to coming out."

I respect a man who is not able to spell Hell properly. It shows that he has been brought up in an amiable creed. You who come to Moulmein treat this bell with respect, and refrain from playing with it, for that hurts the feelings of the worshippers.

In the base of the pagoda were four rooms, lined as to three sides with colossal plaster figures, before each of whom burned one solitary dip whose rays fought with the flood of evening sunshine that came through the windows, and the room was filled with a pale yellow light — unearthly to stand in. Occasionally a woman crept in to one of these rooms to pray, but nearly all the company stayed in the courtyard; but those that faced the figures prayed more zealously than the others, so I judged that their troubles were the greater. Of the actual cult I knew less than nothing; for the neatly

bound English books that we read make no mention of pointing red-tipped straws at a golden image, or of the banging of bells after the custom of worshippers in a Hindu temple. It must be a genial one, however. To begin with, it is quiet and carried on among the fairest possible surroundings that ever landscape offered.

In this particular case, the massive white pagoda shot into the blue from the west of a walled hill that commanded four separate and desirable views as you looked either at the steamer in the river below, the polished silver reaches to the left, the woods to the right, or the roofs of Moulmein to the landward. Between each pause of the rustling of dresses and the low-toned talk of the women fell, from far above, the tinkle of innumerable metal leaves which were stirred by the breeze as they hung from the *'htee* of the pagoda. A golden image winked in the sun; the painted ones stared straight in front of them over the heads of the worshippers, and somewhere below a mallet and a plane were lazily helping to build yet another pagoda in honour of the Lord of the Earth.

Sitting in meditation while the Professor went round with a sacrilegious camera, to the vast terror of the Burmese youth, I made two notable discoveries and nearly went to sleep over them. The first was that the Lord of the Earth is Idleness — thick slab idleness with a little religion stirred in to keep it sweet, and the second was that the shape of the pagoda came originally from a bulging toddy-palm trunk. There was one between me and the far-off sky line, and it exactly duplicated the outlines of a small grey stone building.

Yet a third discovery, and a much more important one,

came to me later on. A dirty little imp of a boy ran by clothed more or less in a beautifully worked silk putso, the like of which I had in vain attempted to secure at Rangoon. A bystander told me that such an article would cost one hundred and ten rupees — exactly ten rupees in excess of the price demanded at Rangoon, when I had been discourteous to a pretty Burmese girl with diamonds in her ears, and had treated her as though she were a Delhi boxwallah.

"Professor," said I, when the camera spidered round the corner, "there is something wrong with this people. They won't work, they aren't all dacoits, and their babies run about with hundred-rupees putsoes on them, while their parents speak the truth. How in the world do they get a living?"

"They exist beautifully," said the Professor; "and I only brought half a dozen plates with me. I shall come again in the morning with some more. Did I ever dream of a place like this?"

"No," said I. "It's perfect, and for the life of me I can't quite see where the precise charm lies."

"In its Beastly Laziness," said the Professor, as he packed the camera, and we went away, regretfully, haunted by the voices of many wind-blown bells.

Not ten minutes from the pagoda we saw a real British bandstand, a shanty labelled "Municipal Office," a collection of P. W. D. bungalows that in vain strove to blast the landscape, and a Madras band. I had never seen Madrassi troops before. They seem to dress just like Tommies, and have an air of much culture and refinement. It is said that they read English books and know all about their rights and privileges. For further details

apply to the Pegu Club, second table from the top on the right hand side as you enter.

In an evil hour I attempted to revive the drooping trade of Moulmein, and to this end bound a native of the place to come on board the steamer next morn with a collection of Burmese silks. It was only a five minutes' pull, and he could have sat in the stern all the while. Morning came, but not the man. Not a boat of watermelons, pink fleshy watermelons, neared the ship. We might have been in quarantine. As we slipped down the river on our way to Penang, I saw the elephants playing with the teak logs as solemnly and as mysteriously as ever. They were the chief inhabitants, and, for aught I know, the rulers of the place. Their lethargy had corrupted the town, and when the Professor wished to photograph them, I believe they went away in scorn.

We are now running down to Penang with the thermometer 87° in the cabins, and anything you please on deck. We have exhausted all our literature, drunk two hundred lemon squashes, played forty different games of cards (Patience mostly), organised a lottery on the run (had it been a thousand rupees instead of ten I should not have won it), and slept seventeen hours out of the twenty-four. It is perfectly impossible to write, but you may be morally the better for the story of the Bad People of Iquique which, "as you have not before heard, I will now proceed to relate." It has just been told me by a German orchid-hunter, fresh from nearly losing his head in the Lushai hills, who has been over most of the world.

Iquique is somewhere in South America — at the back

of or beyond Brazil — and once upon a time there came to it a tribe of Aborigines from out of the woods, so innocent that they wore nothing at all — absolutely nothing at all. They had a grievance, but no garments, and the former they came to lay before His Excellency, the Governor of Iquique. But the news of their coming and their exceeding nakedness had gone before them, and good Spanish ladies of the town agreed that the heathen should first of all be clothed. So they organised a sewing-bee, and the result, which was mainly aprons, was served out to the Bad People with hints as to its use. Nothing could have been better. They appeared in their aprons before the Governor and all the ladies of Iquique, ranged on the steps of the cathedral, only to find that the Governor could not grant their demands. And do you know what these children of nature did? In the twinkling of an eye they had off those aprons, slung them round their necks, and were dancing naked as the dawn before the scandalised ladies of Iquique, who fled with their fans before their eyes into the sanctuary of the cathedral. And when the steps were deserted the Bad People withdrew, shouting and leaping, their aprons still round their necks, for good cloth is valuable property. They encamped near the town, knowing their own power. 'Twas impossible to send the military against them, and equally impossible that Donnas and Señoritas should be exposed to the chance of being shocked whenever they went abroad. No one knew at what hour the Bad People would sweep through the streets. Their demands were therefore granted and Iquique had rest. Nuda est veritas et prevalebit.

"But," said I, "what is there so awful in a naked

Indian — or two hundred naked Indians for that matter?"

"My friend," said the German, "dey vas Indians of Sout' America. I dell you dey do not demselves shtrip vell."

I put my hand on my mouth and went away.

No. IV

SHOWING HOW I CAME TO PALMISTE ISLAND AND THE PLACE OF PAUL AND VIRGINIA, AND FELL ASLEEP IN A GARDEN. A DISQUISITION ON THE FOLLY OF SIGHT-SEEING.

> "Some for the glories of this world and some
> Sigh for the Prophet's paradise to come.
> Ah, take the cash and let the credit go,
> Nor heed the rumble of a distant drum."

THERE is something very wrong in the Anglo-Saxon character. Hardly had the *Africa* dropped anchor in Penang Straits when two of our fellow-passengers were smitten with madness because they heard that another steamer was even then starting for Singapur. If they went by it they would gain several days. Heaven knows why time should have been so precious to them. The news sent them flying into their cabins, and packing their trunks as though their salvation depended upon it. Then they tumbled over the side and were rowed away in a sampan, hot, but happy. They were on a pleasure-trip, and they had gained perhaps three days. That was their pleasure.

Do you recollect Besant's description of Palmiste Island in *My Little Girl* and *So They Were Married?* Penang is Palmiste Island. I found this out from

the ship, looking at the wooded hills that dominate the town, and at the regiments of palm trees three miles away that marked the coast of Wellesley Province. The air was soft and heavy with laziness, and at the ship's side were boat-loads of much jewelled Madrassis — even those to whom Besant has alluded. A squall swept across the water and blotted out the rows of low, red-tiled houses that made up Penang, and the shadows of night followed the storm.

I put my twelve-inch rule in my pocket to measure all the world by, and nearly wept with emotion when on landing at the jetty I fell against a Sikh — a beautiful bearded Sikh, with white leggings and a rifle. As is cold water in a thirsty land so is a face from the old country. My friend had come from Jandiala in the Umritsar district. Did I know Jandiala? Did I not? I began to tell all the news I could recollect about crops and armies and the movements of big men in the far, far north while the Sikh beamed. He belonged to the military police, and it was a good service, but of course it was far from the old country. There was no hard work, and the Chinamen gave but little trouble. They had fights among themselves, but "they do not care to give *us* any impudence;" and the big man swaggered off with the long roll and swing of a whole Pioneer regiment, while I cheered myself with the thought that India — the India I pretend to hold in hatred — was not so far off, after all.

You know our ineradicable tendency to damn everything in the mofussil. Calcutta professes astonishment that Allahabad has a good dancing floor; Allahabad wonders if it is true that Lahore really has an ice-fac-

tory; and Lahore pretends to believe that everybody in Peshawar sleeps armed. Very much in the same way I was amused at seeing a steam tramway in Rangoon, and after we had quitted Moulmein fully expected to find the outskirts of civilisation. Vanity and ignorance were severely shocked when they confronted a long street of business — a street of two-storied houses, full of *ticca-gharies*, shop signs, and above all *jinrickshaws*.

You in India have never seen a proper *'rickshaw*. There are about two thousand of them in Penang, and no two seem alike. They are lacquered with bold figures of dragons and horses and birds and butterflies: their shafts are of black wood bound with white metal, and so strong that the coolie sits upon them when he waits for his fare. There is only one coolie, but he is strong, and he runs just as well as six bell-men. He ties up his pigtail, — being a Cantonese, — and this is a disadvantage to sahibs who cannot speak Tamil, Malay, or Cantonese. Otherwise he might be steered like a camel.

The *'rickshaw* men are patient and long-suffering. The evil-visaged person who drove my carriage lashed at them when they came within whip range, and did his best to drive over them as he headed for the Waterfalls, which are five miles away from Penang Town. I expected that the buildings should stop, choked out among the dense growth of cocoanut. But they continued for many streets, very like Park and Middleton streets in Calcutta, where shuttered houses, which were half-bred between an Indian bungalow and a Rangoon rabbit-hutch, fought with the greenery and crotons as big as small trees. Now and again there blazed the front of a Chinese house, all open-work vermilion, lamp-black, and gold, with six-foot

Chinese lanterns over the doorways and glimpses of quaintly cut shrubs in the well-kept gardens beyond.

We struck into roads fringed with native houses on piles, shadowed by the everlasting cocoanut palms heavy with young nuts. The heat was heavy with the smell of vegetation, and it was not the smell of the earth after the rains. Some bird-thing called out from the deeps of the foliage, and there was a mutter of thunder in the hills which we were approaching: but all the rest was very still — and the sweat ran down our faces in drops.

"Now you've got to walk up that hill," said the driver, pointing to a small barrier outside a well-kept botanical garden; "all the carriages stop here." One's limbs moved as though leaden, and the breath came heavily, drawing in each time the vapour of a Turkish bath. The soil was alive with wet and warmth, and the unknown trees — I was too sleepy to read the labels that some offensively energetic man has written — were wet and warm too. Up on the hillside the voice of the water was saying something, but I was too sleepy to listen; and on the top of the hill lay a fat cloud just like an eider-down quilt tucking everything in safely.

> "And in the afternoon they came unto a land
> In which it seemed always afternoon."

I sat down where I was, for I saw that the upward path was very steep and was cut into rude steps, and an exposition of sleep had come upon me. I was at the mouth of a tiny gorge, exactly where the lotus-eaters had sat down when they began their song, for I recognised the Waterfall and the air round my ears "breathing as one that has a weary dream."

I looked and beheld that I could not give in words the genius of the place. "I can't play the flute, but I have a cousin who plays the violin." I knew a man who could. Some people said he was not a nice man, and I might run the risk of contaminating morals, but nothing mattered in such a climate. See now, go to the very worst of Zola's novels and read there his description of a conservatory. That was it. Several months passed away, but there was neither chill nor burning heat to mark the passage of time. Only, with a sense of acute pain I felt that I must "do" the Waterfall, and I climbed up the steps in the hillside, though every boulder cried "sit down," until I found a small stream of water coursing down the face of a rock, and a much bigger one down my own.

Then we went away to breakfast, the stomach being always more worthy than any amount of sentiment. A turn in the road hid the gardens and stopped the noise of the waters, and that experience was over for all time. Experiences are very like cheroots. They generally begin badly, taste perfect half way through, and at the butt-end are things to be thrown away and never picked up again. . . .

His name was John, and he had a pigtail five feet long — all real hair and no silk braided, and he kept an hotel by the way and fed us with a chicken, into whose innocent flesh onions and strange vegetables had been forced. Till then we had feared Chinamen, especially when they brought food, but now we will eat anything at their hands. The conclusion of the meal was a half-guinea pineapple and a siesta. This is a beautiful thing which we of India — but I am of India no more — do not understand. You lie down and wait for time to pass. You

are not in the least wearied — and you would not go to sleep. You are filled with a divine drowsiness — quite different from the heavy sodden slumber of a hot-weather Sunday, or the businesslike repose of a Europe morning. Now I begin to despise novelists who write about *siestas* in cold climates. I know what the real thing means.

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I have been trying to buy a few things — a *sarong*, which is a *putso* which is a *dhoti;* a pipe; and a "damned Malayan kris." The *sarongs* come chiefly from Germany, the pipes from the pawn-shops, and there are no krises except little toothpick things that could not penetrate the hide of a Malay. In the native town, I found a large army of Chinese — more than I imagined existed in China itself — encamped in spacious streets and houses, some of them sending block-tin to Singapur, some driving fine carriages, others making shoes, chairs, clothes, and every other thing that a large town desires. They were the first army corps on the march of the Mongol. The scouts are at Calcutta, and a flying column at Rangoon. Here begins the main body, some hundred thousand strong, so they say. Was it not De Quincey that had a horror of the Chinese — of their inhumaneness and their inscrutability? Certainly the people in Penang are not nice; they are even terrible to behold. They work hard, which in this climate is manifestly wicked, and their eyes are just like the eyes of their own pet dragons. Our Hindu gods are passable, some of them even jolly — witness our pot-bellied Ganesh; but what can you do with a people who revel in D. T. monsters and crown their roof-ridges with flames of

fire, or the waves of the sea? They swarmed everywhere, and wherever three or four met, there they eat things without name — the insides of ducks for choice. Our deck passengers, I know, fared sumptuously on offal begged from the steward and flavoured with insect-powder to keep the ants off. This, again, is not natural, for a man should eat like a man if he works like one. I could quite understand after a couple of hours (this has the true Globe-trotter twang to it) spent in Chinatown why the lower-caste Anglo-Saxon hates the Celestial. He frightened me, and so I could take no pleasure in looking at his houses, at his wares, or at himself. . . .

The smell of printer's ink is marvellously penetrating. It drew me up two pair of stairs into an office where the exchanges lay about in delightful disorder, and a little hand-press was clacking out proofs just in the old sweet way. Something like the *Gazette of India* showed that the Straits Settlements — even they — had a Government of their own, and I sighed for a dead past as my eye caught the beautiful official phraseology that never varies. How alike we English are! Here is an extract from a report: "And the Chinese form of decoration which formerly covered the office has been wisely obliterated with whitewash."

That was just what I came to inquire about. What were they going to do with the Chinese decoration all over Penang? Would they try to wisely obliterate that?

The Straits Settlement Council which lives at Singapur had just passed a Bill (Ordinance they call it) putting down all Chinese secret societies in the colony, which measure only awaited the Imperial assent. A little business in Singapur connected with some municipal meas-

ure for clearing away overhanging verandahs created a storm, and for three days those who were in the place say the town was entirely at the mercy of the Chinese, who rose all together and made life unpleasant for the authorities. This incident forced the Government to take serious notice of the secret societies who could so control the actions of men, and the result has been a measure which it will not be easy to enforce. A Chinaman *must* have a secret society of some kind. He has been bred up in a country where they were necessary to his comfort, his protection, and the maintenance of his scale of wages from time immemorial, and he will carry them with him as he will carry his opium and his coffin.

"Do you expect then that the societies will collapse by proclamation?" I asked the editor.

"No. There will be a row."

"What row? what sort of a row?"

"More troops, perhaps, and perhaps some gunboats. You see, we shall have Sir Charles Warren then as our Commander-in-Chief at Singapur. Up till the present our military administration has been subordinate to that of Hong-Kong; when that is done away with and we have Sir Charles Warren, things will be different. But there will be a row. Neither you nor I nor any one else will be able to put these things down. Every joss house will be the head of a secret society. What can one do? In the past the Government made some use of them for the detection of crime. Now they are too big and too important to be treated in that way. You will know before long whether we have been able to suppress them. There will be a row."

Certainly the great grievance of Penang is the Chinese

question. She would not be human did she not revile her Municipal Commissioners and talk about the unsanitary condition of the island. If nose and eyes and ears be any guide, she is far cleaner even in her streets than many an Indian cantonment, and her water-supply seems perfection. But I sat in that little newspaper office and listened to stories of municipal intrigue that might have suited Serampore or Calcutta, only the names were a little different, and in place of Ghose and Chuckerbutty one heard titles such as Yih Tat, Lo Eng, and the like. The Englishman's aggressive altruism always leads him to build towns for others, and incite aliens to serve on municipal boards. Then he gets tired of his weakness and starts papers to condemn himself. They had a Chinaman on the Municipality last year. They have now got rid of him, and the present body is constituted of two officials and four non-officials. *Therefore* they complain of the influence of officialdom.

Having thoroughly settled all the differences of Penang to my own great satisfaction, I removed myself to a Chinese theatre set in the open road, and made of sticks and old gunny-bags. The orchestra alone convinced me that there was something radically wrong with the Chinese mind. Once, long ago in Jummu, I heard the infernal clang of the horns used by the Devil-dancers who had come from far beyond Ladakh to do honour to the Prince that day set upon his throne. That was about three thousand miles to the north, but the character of the music was unchanged. A thousand Chinamen stood as close as possible to the horrid din and enjoyed it. Once more, can anything be done to a people without nerves as without digestion, and, if reports speak truly, without

morals? But it is not true that they are born with full-sized pigtails. The thing grows, and in its very earliest stages is the prettiest head-dressing imaginable, being soft brown, very fluffy, about three inches long, and dressed as to the end with red silk. An infant pigtail is just like the first tender sprout of a tulip bulb, and would be lovable were not the Chinese baby so very horrible of hue and shape. He isn't as pretty as the pig that Alice nursed in Wonderland, and he lies quite still and never cries. This is because he is afraid of being boiled and eaten. I saw cold boiled babies on a plate being carried through the heart of the town. They said it was only sucking-pig, but I knew better. Dead sucking-pigs don't grin with their eyes open.

About this time the faces of the Chinese frightened me more than ever, so I ran away to the outskirts of the town and saw a windowless house that carried the Square and Compass in gold and teakwood above the door. I took heart at meeting these familiar things again, and knowing that where they were was good fellowship and much charity, in spite of all the secret societies in the world. Penang is to be congratulated on one of the prettiest little lodges in the East.

No. V

OF THE THRESHOLD OF THE FAR EAST AND THE DWELLERS THEREON. A DISSERTATION UPON THE USE OF THE BRITISH LION.

> "How the world is made for each of us,
> How all we perceive and know in it
> Tends to some moment's product — thus
> When a soul declares itself — to wit
> By its fruit, the thing it does."

"I ASSURE you, Sir, weather as hot as this has not been felt in Singapur for years and years. March is always reckoned our hottest month, but this is quite abnormal."

And I made answer to the stranger wearily: —

"Yes, of course. They always told that lie in the other places. Leave me alone and let me drip."

This is the heat of an orchid-house, — a clinging, remorseless, steam-sweat that knows no variation between night and day. Singapur is another Calcutta, but much more so. In the suburbs they are building rows of cheap houses; in the city they run over you and jostle you into the kennel. These are unfailing signs of commercial prosperity. India ended so long ago that I cannot even talk about the natives of the place. They are all Chinese, except where they are French or Dutch or German. England is by the uninformed supposed to own the

island. The rest belongs to China and the Continent, but chiefly China. I knew I had touched the borders of the Celestial Empire when I was thoroughly impregnated with the reek of Chinese tobacco, a fine-cut, greasy, glossy weed, to whose smoke the aroma of a huqa in the cookhouse is all Rimmell's shop.

Providence conducted me along a beach, in full view of five miles of shipping,—five solid miles of masts and funnels,—to a place called Raffles Hotel, where the food is as excellent as the rooms are bad. Let the traveller take note. Feed at Raffles and sleep at the Hotel de l'Europe. I would have done this but for the apparition of two large ladies tastefully attired in bed-gowns, who sat with their feet propped on a chair. This Joseph ran; but it turned out that they were Dutch ladies from Batavia, and that that was their national costume till dinner time.

"If, as you say, they had on stockings and dressing-gowns, you have nothing to complain of. They generally wear nothing but a night-gown till five o'clock," quoth a man versed in the habits of the land.

I do not know whether he spoke the truth; I am inclined to think that he did; but now I know what "Batavian grace" really means, I don't approve of it. A lady in a dressing-gown disturbs the mind and prevents careful consideration of the political outlook in Singapur, which is now supplied with a set of very complete forts, and is hopefully awaiting some nine-inch breach-loaders that are to adorn them. There is something very pathetic in the trustful, clinging attitude of the Colonies, who ought to have been soured and mistrustful long ago. "We hope the Home Government

may do this. It is possible that the Home Government may do that," is the burden of the song, and in every place where the Englishman cannot breed successfully must continue to be. Imagine an India fit for permanent habitation by our kin, and consider what a place it would be this day, with the painter cut fifty years ago, fifty thousand miles of railways laid down and ten thousand under survey, and possibly an annual surplus. Is this sedition? Forgive me, but I am looking at the shipping outside the verandah, at the Chinamen in the streets, and at the lazy, languid Englishmen in banians and white jackets stretched on the cane chairs, and these things are not nice. The men are not really lazy, as I will try to show later on, but they lounge and loaf and seem to go to office at eleven, which must be bad for work. And they all talk about going home at indecently short intervals, as though that were their right. Once more, if we could only rear children that did not run to leg and nose in the second generation in this part of the world and one or two others, what an amazing disruption of the Empire there would be before half of a Parnell Commission sitting was accomplished! And then, later, when the freed States had plunged into hot water, fought their fights, overborrowed, overspeculated, and otherwise conducted themselves like younger sons, what a coming together and revision of tariffs, ending in one great iron band girdling the earth. Within that limit free trade. Without, rancorous Protection. It would be too vast a hornet's nest for any combination of Powers to disturb. The dream will not come about for a long time, but we shall accomplish something like it one of these days. The birds of passage from Canada,

from Borneo,—Borneo that will have to go through a general rough-and-tumble before she grips her possibilities,—from Australia, from a hundred scattered islands, are saying the same thing: "We are not strong enough yet, but some day We shall be."

Oh! dear people, stewing in India and swearing at all the Governments, it is a glorious thing to be an Englishman. "Our lot has fallen unto us in a fair ground. Yea, we have a goodly heritage." Take a map and look at the long stretch of the Malay Peninsula,—a thousand miles southerly it runs, does it not?—whereon Penang, Malacca, and Singapur are so modestly underlined in red ink. See, now. We have our Residents at every one of the Malay native States of any importance, and right up the line to Kedah and Siam our influence regulates and controls all. Into this land God put first gold and tin, and after these the Englishman, who floats companies, obtains concessions and goes forward. Just at present, one company alone holds a concession of two thousand square miles in the interior. That means mining rights; and that means a few thousand coolies and a settled administration such as obtains in the big Indian collieries, where the heads of the mines are responsible kings.

With the companies will come the railroads. So far the Straits papers spend their space in talking about them, for at present there are only twenty-three or twenty-four miles of narrow-gauge railway open, near a civilised place called Pirates' Creek, in the Peninsula. The Sultan of Johore is, or has been, wavering over a concession for a railway through his country, which will ultimately connect with this Pirates' Creek

line. Singapur is resolved ere long to bridge over the mile or mile-and-a-half Straits between herself and the State of Johore. In this manner a beginning will be made of the southerly extension of Colquhoun's great line running, let us say, from Singapur through the small States and Siam, without a break, into the great Indian railway systems, so that a man will be able to book from here to Calcutta direct. Anything like a business summary of the railway schemes that come up for discussion from time to time would fill a couple of these letters, and would be uncommonly dry reading. You know the sort of "shop" talk that rages among engineers when a new line is being run in India through perfectly known ground, whose traffic-potentialities may be calculated to the last pie. It is very much the same here, with the difference that no one knows for a certainty what the country ahead of the surveys is like, or where the development is likely to stop. This gives breeziness to the conversation. The audacity of the speakers is amazing to one who has been accustomed to see things through Indian eyes. They hint at "running up the Peninsula," establishing communications here, consolidating influence there, and Providence only knows what else; but never a word do they breathe about the necessity for increased troops to stand by and back these little operations. Perhaps they assume that the Home Government will provide, but it does seem strange to hear them cold-bloodedly discussing notions that will inevitably demand doubled garrisons to keep the ventures out of alien hands. However, the merchant-men will do their work, and I suppose we shall borrow three files and a sergeant from somewhere or

other when the time comes, and people begin to realise what sort of a gift our Straits Settlements are. It is so cheap to prophesy. They will in the near future grow into —

The Professor looked over my shoulder at this point. "Bosh!" said he. "They will become just a supplementary China — another field for Chinese cheap labour. When the Dutch Settlements were returned in 1815,— all these islands hereabouts, you know,— we should have handed over these places as well. Look!" He pointed at the swarming Chinamen below.

"Let me dream my dream, 'Fessor. I'll take my hat in a minute and settle the question of Chinese immigration in five minutes." But I confess it was mournful to look into the street, which ought to have been full of Beharis, Madrassis, and men from the Konkan — from our India.

Then up and spake a sunburned man who had interests in North Borneo — he owned caves in the mountains, some of them nine hundred feet high, so please you, and filled with the guano of ages, and had been telling me leech-stories till my flesh crawled. "North Borneo," said he, calmly, "wants a million of labourers to do her any good. One million coolies. Men are wanted everywhere,— in the Peninsula, in Sumatra for the tobacco planting, in Java,— everywhere; but Borneo — the Company's provinces that is to say — needs a million coolies." It is pleasant to oblige a stranger, and I felt that I spoke with India at my back. "We could oblige you with two million or twenty, for the matter of that," said I, generously.

"Your men are no good," said the North Borneo man.

"If one man goes away, he must have a whole village to look after his wants. India as a labour field is no good to us, and the Sumatra men say that your coolies either can't or won't tend tobacco properly. We must have China coolies as the land develops."

Oh, India, oh, my country! This it is to have inherited a highly organised civilisation and an ancient precedence code. That your children shall be scoffed at by the alien as useless outside their own pot-bound provinces. Here was a labour outlet, a door to full dinners, through which men — yellow men with pigtails — were pouring by the ten thousand, while in Bengal the cultured native editor was shrieking over "atrocities" committed in moving a few hundred souls a few hundred miles into Assam.

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No. VI

OF THE WELL-DRESSED ISLANDERS OF SINGAPUR AND THEIR DIVERSIONS; PROVING THAT ALL STATIONS ARE EXACTLY ALIKE. SHOWS HOW ONE CHICAGO JEW AND AN AMERICAN CHILD CAN POISON THE PUREST MIND.

"We are not divided,
All one body we —
One in hope and doctrine,
One in Charity."

When one comes to a new station the first thing to do is to call on the inhabitants. This duty I had neglected, preferring to consort with Chinese till the Sabbath, when I learnt that Singapur went to the Botanical Gardens and listened to secular music.

All the Englishmen in the island congregated there. The Botanical Gardens would have been lovely at Kew, but here, where one knew that they were the only place of recreation open to the inhabitants, they were not pleasant. All the plants of all the tropics grew there together, and the orchid-house was roofed with thin battens of wood — just enough to keep off the direct rays of the sun. It held waxy-white splendours from Manila, the Philippines, and tropical Africa — plants that were half-slugs, drawing nourishment apparently from their own wooden labels; but there was no difference between the temperature of the orchid-house

and the open air; both were heavy, dank, and steaming. I would have given a month's pay — but I have no month's pay — for a clear breath of stifling hot wind from the sands of Sirsa, for the darkness of a Punjab dust-storm, in exchange for the perspiring plants, and the tree-fern that sweated audibly.

Just when I was most impressed with my measureless distance from India, my carriage advanced to the sound of slow music, and I found myself in the middle of an Indian station — not quite as big as Allahabad, and infinitely prettier than Lucknow. It overlooked the gardens that sloped in ridge and hollow below; and the barracks were set in much greenery, and there was a mess-house that suggested long and cooling drinks, and there walked round about a British band. It was just We Our Noble Selves. In the centre was the pretty *Memsahib* with light hair and fascinating manners, and the plump little *Memsahib* that talks to everybody and is in everybody's confidence, and the spinster fresh from home, and the bean-fed, well-groomed subaltern with the light coat and fox-terrier. On the benches sat the fat colonel, and the large judge, and the engineer's wife, and the merchant-man and his family after their kind — male and female met I them, and but for the little fact that they were entire strangers to me, I would have saluted them all as old friends. I knew what they were talking about, could see them taking stock of one another's dresses out of the corners of their eyes, could see the young men backing and filling across the ground in order to walk with the young maidens, and could hear the "Do you think so's" and "Not really's" of our polite conversation. It is an awful thing to sit in

a hired carriage and watch one's own people, and know that though you know their life, you have neither part nor lot in it.

> "I am a shadow now; alas! alas!
> Upon the skirts of human nature dwelling,"

I said mournfully to the Professor. He was looking at Mrs. ——, or some one so like her that it came to the same thing. "Am I travelling round the world to discover *these* people?" said he. "I've seen 'em all before. There's Captain Such-an-one and Colonel Such-another and Miss What's-its-name as large as life and twice as pale."

The Professor had hit it. That was the difference. People in Singapur are dead-white — as white as Naaman — and the veins on the backs of their hands are painted in indigo.

It is as though the Rains were just over, and none of the womenfolk had been allowed to go to the hills. Yet no one talks about the unhealthiness of Singapur. A man lives well and happily until he begins to feel unwell. Then he feels worse because the climate allows him no chance of pulling himself together — and then he dies. Typhoid fever appears to be one gate of death, as it is in India; also liver. The nicest thing in the civil station which lies, of course, far from the native town, and boasts pretty little bungalows — is Thomas — dear, white-robed, swaggering, smoking, swearing Thomas Atkins the unchangeable, who listens to the band and wanders down the bazaars, and slings the unmentionable adjective about the palm trees exactly as though he were in Mian Mir. The 58th (Northamptonshire)

live in these parts; so Singapur is quite safe, you see.

Nobody would speak to me in the gardens, though I felt that they ought to have invited me to drink, and I crept back to my hotel to eat six different fresh chutnies with one curry.

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I want to go Home! I want to go back to India! I am miserable. The steamship *Nawab* at this time of the year ought to have been empty, instead of which we have one hundred first-class passengers and sixty-six second. All the pretty girls are in the latter class. Something must have happened at Colombo — two steamers must have clashed. We have the results of the collision, and we are a menagerie. The captain says that there ought to have been only ten or twelve passengers by rights, and had the rush been anticipated, a larger steamer would have been provided. Personally, I consider that half our shipmates ought to be thrown overboard. They are only travelling round the world for pleasure, and that sort of dissipation leads to the forming of hasty and intemperate opinions. Anyhow, give me freedom and the cockroaches of the British India, where we dined on deck, altered the hours of the meals by plebiscite, and were lords of all we saw. You know the chain-gang regulations of the P. and O.: how you must approach the captain standing on your head with your feet waving reverently; how you must crawl into the presence of the chief steward on your belly and call him Thrice-Puissant Bottle-washer; how you must not smoke abaft the sheep-pens; must not stand in the

companion; must put on a clean coat when the ship's library is opened; and crowning injustice, must order your drinks for tiffin and dinner one meal in advance? How can a man full of Pilsener beer reach that keen-set state of quiescence needful for ordering his dinner liquor? This shows ignorance of human nature. The P. and O. want healthy competition. They call their captains commanders and act as though 'twere a favour to allow you to embark. Again, freedom and the British India for ever, and down with the comforts of a coolie ship and the prices of a palace!

There are about thirty women on board, and I have been watching with a certain amount of indignation their concerted attempt at killing the stewardess, — a delicate and sweet-mannered lady. I think they will accomplish their end. The saloon is ninety feet long, and the stewardess runs up and down it for nine hours a day. In her intervals of relaxation she carries cups of beef-tea to the frail sylphs who cannot exist without food between 9 A.M. and 1 P.M. This morning she advanced to me and said, as though it were the most natural thing in the world: "Shall I take away your tea-cup, sir?" She was a real white woman, and the saloon was full of hulking, half-bred Portuguese. One young Englishman let her take his cup, and actually did not turn round when he handed it. This is awful, and teaches me, as nothing else has done, how far I am from the blessed East. She (the stewardess) talks standing up, to men who sit down!

We in India are currently supposed to be unkind to our servants. I should very much like to see a sweeper doing one-half of the work these strapping white matrons

and maids exact from their sister. They make her carry things about and don't even say, "Thank you." She has no name, and if you bawl, "Stewardess," she is bound to come. Isn't it degrading?

But the real reason of my wish to return is because I have met a lump of Chicago Jews and am afraid that I shall meet many more. The ship is full of Americans, but the American-German-Jew boy is the most awful of all. One of them has money, and wanders from bow to stern asking strangers to drink, bossing lotteries on the run, and committing other atrocities. It is currently reported that he is dying. Unfortunately he does not die quickly enough.

But the real monstrosity of the ship is an American who is not quite grown up. I cannot call it a boy, though officially it is only eight, wears a striped jacket, and eats with the children. It has the wearied appearance of an infant monkey — there are lines round its mouth and under its eyebrows. When it has nothing else to do it will answer to the name of Albert. It has been two years on the continuous travel; has spent a month in India; has seen Constantinople, Tripoli, Spain; has lived in tents and on horseback for thirty days and thirty nights, as it was careful to inform me; and has exhausted the round of this world's delights. There is no flesh on its bones, and it lives in the smoking-room financing the arrangements of the daily lottery. I was afraid of it, but it followed me, and in a level expressionless voice began to tell me how lotteries were constructed. When I protested that I knew, it continued without regarding the interruption, and finally, as a reward for my patience, volunteered to give me the

names and idiosyncracies of all on board. Then it vanished through the smoking-room window because the door was only eight feet high, and therefore too narrow for that bulk of abnormal experiences. On certain subjects it was partly better informed than I; on others it displayed the infinite credulity of a two-year-old. But the wearied eyes were ever the same. They will be the same when it is fifty. I was more sorry for it than I could say. All its reminiscences had got jumbled, and incidents of Spain were baled into Turkey and India. Some day a schoolmaster will get hold of it and try to educate it, and I should dearly like to see at which end he will begin. The head is too full already and the — the other part does not exist. Albert is, I presume, but an ordinary American child. He was to me a revelation. Now I want to see a little American girl — but not now — not just now. My nerves are shattered by the Jews and Albert; and unless they recover their tone I shall turn back at Yokohama.

No. VII

SHOWS HOW I ARRIVED IN CHINA AND SAW ENTIRELY THROUGH THE GREAT WALL AND OUT UPON THE OTHER SIDE.

> "Where naked ignorance
> Delivers brawling judgments all day long
> On all things unashamed."

THE past few days on the *Nawab* have been spent amid a new people and a very strange one. There were speculators from South Africa: financiers from home (these never talked in anything under hundreds of thousands of pounds and, I fear, bluffed awfully); there were Consuls of far-off China ports and partners of China shipping houses talking a talk and thinking thoughts as different from Ours as is Our slang from the slang of London. But it would not interest you to learn the story of our shipload — to hear about the hard-headed Scotch merchant with a taste for spiritualism, who begged me to tell him whether there was really anything in Theosophy and whether Tibet was full of levitating *chelas*, as he believed; or of the little London curate out for a holiday who had seen India and had faith in the progress of missionary work there — who believed that the C. M. S. was shaking the thoughts and convictions of the masses, and that the Word of the Lord would ere long prevail above all other councils. He in the night-watches tackled and dis-

posed of the great mysteries of Life and Death, and was looking forward to a lifetime of toil amid a parish without a single rich man in it.

When you are in the China Seas be careful to keep all your flannel-wear to hand. In an hour the steamer swung from tropical heat (including prickly) to a cold raw fog, as wet as a Scotch mist. Morning gave us a new world — somewhere between Heaven and Earth. The sea was smoked glass: reddish grey islands lay upon it under fog-banks that hovered fifty feet above our heads. The squat sails of junks danced for an instant like autumn leaves in the breeze and disappeared, and there was no solidity in the islands against which the glassy levels splintered in snow. The steamer groaned and grunted and howled because she was so damp and miserable, and I groaned also because the guide-book said that Hong-Kong had the finest harbour in the world, and I could not see two hundred yards in any direction. Yet this ghost-like in-gliding through the belted fog was livelily mysterious, and became more so when the movement of the air vouchsafed us a glimpse of a warehouse and a derrick, both apparently close aboard, and behind them the shoulder of a mountain. We made our way into a sea of flat-nosed boats all manned by most muscular humans, and the Professor said that the time to study the Chinese question was now. We, however, were carrying a new general to these parts, and nice, new, well-fitting uniforms came off to make him welcome; and in the contemplation of things too long withheld from me I forgot about the Pigtails. Gentlemen of the mess-room, who would wear linen coats on parade if you could,

wait till you have been a month without seeing a patrol-jacket or hearing a spur go *ling-a-ling*, and you will know why civilians want you always to wear uniform. The General, by the way, was a nice General. He did not know much about the Indian Army or the ways of a gentleman called Roberts, if I recollect aright; but he said that Lord Wolseley was going to be Commander-in-Chief one of these days on account of the pressing needs of our Army. He was a revelation because he talked about nothing but English military matters, which are very, very different from Indian ones, and are mixed up with politics.

All Hong-Kong is built on the sea face; the rest is fog. One muddy road runs for ever in front of a line of houses which are partly Chowringhee and partly Rotherhithe. You live in the houses, and when wearied of this, walk across the road and drop into the sea, if you can find a square foot of unencumbered water. So vast is the accumulation of country shipping, and such is its dirtiness as it rubs against the bund, that the superior inhabitants are compelled to hang their boats from davits above the common craft, who are greatly disturbed by a multitude of steam-launches. These ply for amusement and the pleasure of whistling, and are held in such small esteem that every hotel owns one, and the others are masterless. Beyond the launches lie more steamers than the eye can count, and four out of five of these belong to Us. I was proud when I saw the shipping at Singapur, but I swell with patriotism as I watch the fleets of Hong-Kong from the balcony of the Victoria Hotel. I can almost spit into the water; but many mariners stand below and they are a strong breed.

How recklessly selfish does a traveller become! We had dropped for more than ten days all the world outside our trunks, and almost the first word in the hotel was: "John Bright is dead, and there has been an awful hurricane at Samoa."

"Ah! indeed that's very sad; but look here, where do you say my rooms are?" At home the news would have given talk for half a day. It was dismissed in half the length of a hotel corridor. One cannot sit down to think with a new world humming outside the window — with all China to enter upon and possess.

A rattling of trunks in the halls — a click of heels — and the apparition of an enormous gaunt woman wrestling with a small Madrassi servant. . . . "Yes — I haf travelled everywhere and I shall travel everywhere else. I go now to Shanghai and Pekin. I have been in Moldavia, Russia, Beyrout, all Persia, Colombo, Delhi, Dacca, Benares, Allahabad, Peshawar, the Ali Musjid in that pass, Malabar, Singapur, Penang, here in this place, and Canton. I am Austrian-Croat, and I shall see the States of America and perhaps Ireland. I travel for ever; I am — how you call? — *veuve* — widow. My husband, he was dead; and so I am sad — I am always sad und so I trafel. I am alife of course, but I do not live. You onderstandt? Always sad. Vill you tell them the name of the ship to which they shall warf my trunks now. You trafel for pleasure? So! I trafel because I am alone und sad — always sad."

The trunks disappeared, the door shut, the heels clicked down the passage, and I was left scratching my head in wonder. How did that conversation begin — why did it end, and what is the use of meeting eccen-

tricities who never explained themselves? I shall never get an answer, but that conversation is true, every word of it. I see now where the fragmentary school of novelists get their material from.

When I went into the streets of Hong-Kong I stepped into thick slushy London mud of the kind that strikes chilly through the boot, and the rattle of innumerable wheels was as the rattle of hansoms. A soaking rain fell, and all the sahibs hailed 'rickshaws, — they call them 'ricks here, — and the wind was chillier than the rain. It was the first touch of honest weather since Calcutta. No wonder with such a climate that Hong-Kong was ten times livelier than Singapur, that there were signs of building everywhere, and gas-jets in all the houses, that colonnades and domes were scattered broadcast, and the Englishmen walked as Englishmen should — hurriedly and looking forward. All the length of the main street was verandahed, and the Europe shops squandered plate glass by the square yard. (*Nota bene.* — As in Simla so elsewhere: mistrust the plate glass shops. You pay for their fittings in each purchase.)

The same Providence that runs big rivers so near to large cities puts main thoroughfares close to big hotels. I went down Queen Street, which is not very hilly. All the other streets that I looked up were built in steps after the fashion of Clovelly, and under blue skies would have given the Professor scores of good photographs. The rain and the fog blotted the views. Each upward-climbing street ran out in white mist that covered the sides of a hill, and the downward-sloping ones were lost in the steam from the waters of the harbour, and both were very strange to see. "Hi-yi-yow,"

said my 'rickshaw coolie and balanced me on one wheel. I got out and met first a German with a beard, then three jolly sailor boys from a man-of-war, then a sergeant of Sappers, then a Parsee, then two Arabs, then an American, then a Jew, then a few thousand Chinese all carrying something, and then the Professor.

"They make plates — instantaneous plates — in Tokio, I'm told. What d' you think of that?" he said. "Why, in India, the Survey Department are the only people who make their own plates. Instantaneous plates in Tokio; think of it!"

I had owed the Professor one for a long time. "After all," I replied, "it strikes me that we have made the mistake of thinking too much of India. We thought we were civilised, for instance. Let us take a lower place. This beats Calcutta into a hamlet."

And in good truth it did, because it was clean beyond the ordinary, because the houses were uniform, three storied, and verandahed, and the pavements were of stone. I met one horse, very ashamed of himself, who was looking after a cart on the sea road, but upstairs there are no vehicles save 'rickshaws. Hong-Kong has killed the romance of the 'rickshaw in my mind. They ought to be sacred to pretty ladies, instead of which men go to office in them, officers in full canonicals use them; tars try to squeeze in two abreast, and from what I have heard down at the barracks they do occasionally bring to the guard-room the drunken defaulter. "He falls asleep inside of it, Sir, and saves trouble." The Chinese naturally have the town for their own, and profit by all our building improvements and regulations. Their golden and red signs flame down the Queen's Road,

but they are careful to supplement their own tongue by well-executed Europe lettering. I found only one exception, thus: —

Fussing, Garpenter
And Gabinet Naktr
Has good Gabi
Nets tor Sale.

The shops are made to catch the sailor and the curio hunter, and they succeed admirably. When you come to these parts put all your money in a bank and tell the manager man not to give it you, however much you ask. So shall you be saved from bankruptcy.

The Professor and I made a pilgrimage from Kee Sing even unto Yi King, who sells the decomposed fowl, and each shop was good. Though it sold shoes or sucking pigs, there was some delicacy of carving or gilded tracery in front to hold the eye, and each thing was quaint and striking of its kind. A fragment of twisted roots helped by a few strokes into the likeness of huddled devils, a running knop and flower cornice, a dull red and gold half-door, a split bamboo screen — they were all good, and their joinings and splicings and mortisings were accurate. The baskets of the coolies were good in shape, and the rattan fastenings that clenched them to the polished bamboo yoke were whipped down, so that there were no loose ends. You could slide in and out the drawers in the slung chests of the man who sold dinners to the 'rickshaw coolies; and the pistons of the little wooden hand-pumps in the shops worked accurately in their sockets.

I was studying these things while the Professor was roaming through carved ivories, broidered silks, panels

of inlay, tortoise-shell filigree, jade-tipped pipes, and the God of Art only knows what else.

"I don't think even as much of him (meaning our Indian craftsman) as I used to do," said the Professor, taking up a tiny ivory grotesque of a small baby trying to pull a water-buffalo out of its wallow — the whole story of beast and baby written in the hard ivory. The same thought was in both our minds; we had gone near the subject once or twice before.

"They are a hundred times his superior in mere idea — let alone execution," said the Professor, his hand on a sketch in woods and gems of a woman caught in a gale of wind protecting her baby from its violence.

"Yes; and don't you see that *they* only introduce aniline dyes into things intended for *us*. Whereas *he* wears them on his body whenever he can. What made this yellow image of a shopman here take delight in a dwarf orange tree in a turquoise blue pot?" I continued, sorting a bundle of cheap China spoons — all good in form, colour, and use. The big-bellied Chinese lanterns above us swayed in the wind with a soft chafing of oiled paper, but they made no sign, and the shopkeeper in blue was equally useless.

"You wanchee buy? Heap plitty things here," said he; and he filled a tobacco-pipe from a dull green leather pouch held at the mouth with a little bracelet of plasma, or it might have been the very jade. He was playing with a brown-wood abacus, and by his side was his day-book bound in oiled paper, and the tray of Indian ink, with the brushes and the porcelain supports for the brushes. He made an entry in his book and daintily painted in his latest transaction. The

Chinese of course have been doing this for a few thousand years, but Life, and its experiences, is as new to me as it was to Adam, and I marvelled.

"Wanchee buy?" reiterated the shopman after he had made his last flourish.

"You," said I, in the new tongue which I am acquiring, "wanchee know one piecee information b'long my pidgin. Savvy these things? Have got soul, you?"

"Have got how?"

"Have got one piecee soul — allee same spilit? No savvy? This way then — your people lookee allee same devil; but makee culio allee same pocket-Joss, and not giving any explanation. Why-for are you such a horrible contradiction?"

"No savvy. Two dollar an' half," he said, balancing a cabinet in his hand. The Professor had not heard. His mind was oppressed with the fate of the Hindu.

"There are three races who can work," said the Professor, looking down the seething street where the 'rickshaws tore up the slush, and the babel of Cantonese, and pidgin went up to the yellow fog in a jumbled snarl.

"But there is only one that can swarm," I answered. "The Hindu cuts his own throat and dies, and there are too few of the Sahib-log to last for ever. These people work and spread. They must have souls or they couldn't understand pretty things."

"I can't make it out," said the Professor. "They are better artists than the Hindu, — that carving you are looking at is Japanese, by the way, — better artists and stronger workmen, man for man. They pack close and eat everything, and they can live on nothing."

"And I've been praising the beauties of Indian Art all

my days." It was a little disappointing when you come to think of it, but I tried to console myself by the thought that the two lay so far apart there was no comparison possible. And yet accuracy is surely the touchstone of all Art.

"They will overwhelm the world," said the Professor, calmly, and he went out to buy tea.

Neither at Penang, Singapur, nor this place have I seen a single Chinaman asleep while daylight lasted. Nor have I seen twenty men who were obviously loafing. All were going to some definite end — if it were only like the coolie on the wharf, to steal wood from the scaffolding of a half-built house. In his own land, I believe, the Chinaman is treated with a certain amount of carelessness, not to say ferocity. Where he hides his love of art, the Heaven that made him out of the yellow earth that holds so much iron only knows. His love is for little things, or else why should he get quaint pendants for his pipe, and at the backmost back of his shop build up for himself a bowerbird's collection of odds and ends, every one of which has beauty if you hold it sufficiently close to the eye. It grieves me that I cannot account for the ideas of a few hundred million men in a few hours. This much, however, seems certain. If we had control over as many Chinamen as we have natives of India, and had given them one tithe of the cossetting, the painful pushing forward, and studious, even nervous, regard of their interests and aspirations that we have given to India, we should long ago have been expelled from, or have reaped the reward of, the richest land on the face of the earth. A pair of my shoes have been, oddly enough, wrapped in a news-

paper which carries for its motto the words, "There is no Indian nation, though there exists the germs of an Indian nationality," or something very like that. This thing has been moving me to unholy laughter. The great big lazy land that we nurse and wrap in cotton-wool, and ask every morning whether it is strong enough to get out of bed, seems like a heavy soft cloud on the far-away horizon; and the babble that we were wont to raise about its precious future and its possibilities, no more than the talk of children in the streets who have made a horse out of a pea-pod and match-sticks, and wonder if it will ever walk. I am sadly out of conceit of mine own other — not mother — country now that I have had my boots blacked at once every time I happened to take them off. The blacker did not do it for the sake of a gratuity, but because it was his work. Like the beaver of old, he had to climb that tree; the dogs were after him. There was competition.

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Is there really such a place as Hong-Kong? People say so, but I have not yet seen it. Once indeed the clouds lifted and I saw a granite house perched like a cherub on nothing, a thousand feet above the town. It looked as if it might be the beginning of a civil station, but a man came up the street and said, "See this fog. It will be like this till September. You'd better go away." I shall not go. I shall encamp in front of the place until the fog lifts and the rain ceases. At present, and it is the third day of April, I am sitting in front of a large coal fire and thinking of the "frosty Caucasus" — you poor creatures in torment afar. And you think

as you go to office and orderly-room that you are helping forward England's mission in the East. 'Tis a pretty delusion, and I am sorry to destroy it, but you have conquered the wrong country.

Let us annex China.

No. VIII

OF JENNY AND HER FRIENDS. SHOWING HOW A MAN MAY GO TO SEE LIFE AND MEET DEATH THERE. OF THE FELICITY OF LIFE AND THE HAPPINESS OF CORINTHIAN KATE. THE WOMAN AND THE CHOLERA.

> "Love and let love, and so will I,
> But, sweet, for me no more with you,
> Not while I live, not though I die.
> Good night, good-by!"

I AM entirely the man about town, and sickness is no word for my sentiments. It began with an idle word in a bar-room. It ended goodness knows where. That the world should hold French, German, and Italian ladies of the ancient profession is no great marvel; but it is to one who has lived in India something shocking to meet again Englishwomen in the same sisterhood. When an opulent papa sends his son and heir round the world to enlarge his mind, does he reflect, I wonder, on the places into which the innocent strolls under the guidance of equally inexperienced friends? I am disposed to think that he does not. In the interest of the opulent papa, and from a genuine desire to see what they call Life, with a capital Hell, I went through Hong-Kong for the space of a night. I am glad that I am not a happy father with a stray son who thinks that he knows all the ropes. Vice must be

pretty much the same all the round world over, but if a man wishes to get out of pleasure with it, let him go to Hong-Kong.

"Of course things are out and away better at 'Frisco," said my guide, "but we consider this very fair for the Island." It was not till a fat person in a black dressing-gown began to squeal demands for horrible stuff called "a bottle of wine" that I began to understand the glory of the situation. I was seeing Life. "Life" is a great thing. It consists in swigging sweet champagne that was stolen from a steward of the P. and O., and exchanging bad words with pale-faced baggages who laugh demnibly without effort and without emotion. The *argot* of the real "chippy" (this means man of the world — *Anglice*, a half-drunk youth with his hat on the back of his head) is not easy to come at. It requires an apprenticeship in America. I stood appalled at the depth and richness of the American language, of which I was privileged to hear a special dialect. There were girls who had been to Leadville and Denver and the wilds of the wilder West, who had acted in minor companies, and who had generally misconducted themselves in a hundred weary ways. They chattered like daws and shovelled down the sickly liquor that made the rooms reek. As long as they talked sensibly things were amusing, but a sufficiency of liquor made the mask drop, and verily they swore by all their gods, chief of whom is Obidicut. Very many men have heard a white woman swear, but some few, and among these I have been, are denied the experience. It is quite a revelation; and if nobody tilts you backwards out of your chair, you can reflect on heaps of

things connected with it. So they cursed and they drank and they told tales, sitting in a circle, till I felt that this was really Life and a thing to be quitted if I wished to like it. The young man who knew a thing or two, and gave the girls leave to sell him if they could, was there of course, and the hussies sold him as he stood for all he considered himself worth; and I saw the by-play. Surely the safest way to be fooled is to know everything. Then there was an interlude and some more shrieks and howls, which the generous public took as indicating immense mirth and enjoyment of Life; and I came to yet another establishment, where the landlady lacked the half of her left lung, as a cough betrayed, but was none the less amusing in a dreary way, until she also dropped the mask and the playful jesting began. All the jokes I had heard before at the other place. It is a poor sort of Life that cannot spring one new jest a day. More than ever did the youth cock his hat and explain that he was a real "chippy," and that there were no flies on him. Any one without a cast-iron head would be "real chippy" next morning after one glass of that sirupy champagne. I understand now why men feel insulted when sweet fizz is offered to them. The second interview closed as the landlady gracefully coughed us into the passage, and so into the healthy, silent streets. She was very ill indeed, and announced that she had but four months more to live.

"Are we going to hold these dismal levees all through the night?" I demanded at the fourth house, where I dreaded the repetition of the thrice-told tales.

"It's better in 'Frisco. Must amuse the girls a little bit, y'know. Walk round and wake 'em up. That's Life. You never saw it in India?" was the reply.

"No, thank God, I didn't. A week of this would make me hang myself," I returned, leaning wearily against a door-post. There were very loud sounds of revelry by night here, and the inmates needed no waking up. One of them was recovering from a debauch of three days, and the other was just entering upon the same course. Providence protected me all through. A certain austere beauty of countenance had made every one take me for a doctor or a parson — a qualified parson, I think; and so I was spared many of the more pronounced jokes, and could sit and contemplate the Life that was so sweet. I thought of the Oxonian in *Tom and Jerry* playing jigs at the spinet, — you seen the old-fashioned plate, — while Corinthian Tom and Corinthian Kate danced a stately saraband in a little carpeted room. The worst of it was, the women were real women and pretty, and like some people I knew, and when they stopped the insensate racket for a while they were well behaved.

"Pass for real ladies anywhere," said my friend. "Aren't these things well managed?"

Then Corinthian Kate began to bellow for more drinks, — it was three in the morning, — and the current of hideous talk recommenced.

They spoke about themselves as "gay." This does not look much on paper. To appreciate the full grimness of the sarcasm hear it from their lips amid their own surroundings. I winked with vigour to show that I appreciated Life and was a real chippy, and that upon me, too, there were no flies. There is an intoxication in company that carries a man to excess of mirth; but when a party of four deliberately sit down to drink

and swear, the bottom tumbles out of the amusement somehow, and loathing and boredom follow. A night's reflection has convinced me that there is no hell for these women in another world. They have their own in this Life, and I have been through it a little way. Still carrying the brevet rank of doctor, it was my duty to watch through the night to the dawn a patient — gay, *toujours* gay, remember — quivering on the verge of a complaint called the "jumps." Corinthian Kate will get hers later on. Her companion, emerging from a heavy drink, was more than enough for me. She was an unmitigated horror, until I lost detestation in genuine pity. The fear of death was upon her for a reason that you shall hear.

"I say, you say you come from India. Do you know anything about cholera?"

"A little," I answered. The voice of the questioner was cracked and quavering. A long pause.

"I say, Doctor, what are the symptoms of cholera? A woman died just over the street there last week."

"This is pleasant," I thought. But I must remember that it is Life.

"She died last week — cholera. My God, I tell you she was dead in six hours! I guess I'll get cholera, too. I can't, though. Can I? I thought I had it two days ago. It hurt me terribly. I can't get it, can I? It never attacks people twice, does it? Oh, *say* it doesn't and be d——d to you. Doctor, what are the symptoms of cholera?"

I waited till she had detailed her own attack, assured her that these and no others were the symptoms, and — may this be set to my credit — that cholera never

attacked twice. This soothed her for ten minutes. Then she sprang up with an oath and shrieked: —

"I won't be buried in Hong-Kong. That frightens me. When I die — of cholera — take me to 'Frisco and bury me there. In 'Frisco — Lone Mountain 'Frisco — you hear, Doctor?"

I heard and promised. Outside the birds were beginning to twitter and the dawn was pencilling the shutters.

"I say, Doctor, did you ever know Cora Pearl?"

"Knew *of* her." I wondered whether she was going to walk round the room to all eternity with her eyes glaring at the ceiling and her hands twisting and untwisting one within the other.

"Well," she began, in an impressive whisper, "it was young Duval shot himself on her mat and made a bloody mess there. I mean real bloody. You don't carry a pistol, Doctor? Savile did. You didn't know Savile. He was my husband in the States. But I'm English, pure English. That's what I am. Let's have a bottle of wine, I'm so nervous. Not good for me? What the — No, you're a doctor. You know what's good against cholera. Tell me! Tell me."

She crossed to the shutters and stared out, her hand upon the bolt, and the bolt clacked against the wood because of the tremulous hand.

"I tell you Corinthian Kate's drunk — full as she can hold. She's always drinking. Did you ever see my shoulder — these two marks on it? They were given me by a man — a gentleman — the night before last. I *didn't* fall against any furniture. He struck me with his cane twice, the beast, the beast, the beast! If I had been full, I'd have knocked the dust out of him.

The beast! But I only went into the verandah and cried fit to break my heart. Oh, the beast!"

She paced the room, chafing her shoulder and crooning over it as though it were an animal. Then she swore at the man. Then she fell into a sort of stupor, but moaned and swore at the man in her sleep, and wailed for her *amah* to come and dress her shoulder.

Asleep she was not unlovely, but the mouth twitched and the body was shaken with shiverings, and there was no peace in her at all. Daylight showed her purple-eyed, slack-cheeked, and staring, racked with a headache and the nervous twitches. Indeed I was seeing Life; but it did not amuse me, for I felt that I, though I only made capital of her extreme woe, was guilty equally with the rest of my kind that had brought her here.

Then she told lies. At least I was informed that they were lies later on by the real man of the world. They related to herself and her people, and if untrue must have been motiveless, for all was sordid and sorrowful, though she tried to gild the page with a book of photos which linked her to her past. Not being a man of the world, I prefer to believe that the tales were true, and thank her for the honour she did me in the telling.

I had fancied that the house had nothing sadder to show me than her face. Here was I wrong. Corinthian Kate had really been drinking, and rose up reeling drunk, which is an awful thing to witness, and makes one's head ache sympathetically. Something had gone wrong in the slatternly menage where the plated tea-services were mixed with cheap China; and the household was being called to account. I watched her clutching the mosquito net for support, a horror and an offence in the

eye of the guiltless day. I heard her swear in a thick, sodden voice as I have never yet heard a man swear, and I marvelled that the house did not thunder in on our heads. Her companion interposed, but was borne down by a torrent of blasphemy, and the half a dozen little dogs that infested the room removed themselves beyond reach of Corinthian Kate's hand or foot. That she was a handsome woman only made the matter worse. The companion collapsed shivering on one of the couches, and Kate swayed to and fro and cursed God and man and earth and heaven with puffed lips. If Alma Tadema could have painted her, — an arrangement in white, black hair, flashing eyes, and bare feet, — we should have seen the true likeness of the Eternal Priestess of Humanity. Or she would have been better drawn when the passion was over, tottering across the room, a champagne glass held high above her head, shouting, at ten o'clock in the morning, for some more of the infamous brewage that was even then poisoning the air of the whole house. She got her liquor, and the two women sat down to share it together. That was their breakfast.

I went away very sick and miserable, and as the door closed I saw the two drinking.

"Out and away better is 'Frisco," said the real "chippy" one. "But you see they are awfully nice — could pass for ladies any time they like. I tell you a man has to go round and keep his eyes open among them when he's seeing a little sporting life."

I have seen all that I wish to see, and henceforward I will pass. There may be better champagne and better drinkers in 'Frisco and elsewhere, but the talk will be

the same, and the mouldiness and staleness of it all will be the same till the end of time. If this be Life, give me a little honest death, without drinks and without foul jesting. Anyway you look at it 'tis a poor performance, badly played, and too near to a tragedy to be pleasant. But it seems to amuse the young man wandering about the world, and I cannot believe that it is altogether good for him — unless, indeed, it makes him fonder of his home.

And mine was the greater sin. I was driven by no gust of passion, but went in cold blood to make my account of this Inferno, and to measure the measureless miseries of life. For the wholly insignificant sum of thirty dollars I had purchased information and disgust more than I required, and the right to look after a woman half crazed with drink and fear the third part of a terrible night. Mine was the greater sin.

When we stepped back into the world I was glad that the fog stood between myself and the heaven above.

No. IX

SOME TALK WITH A TAIPAN AND A GENERAL: PROVES IN WHAT MANNER A SEA PICNIC MAY BE A SUCCESS.

"I should like to rise and go
Where the golden apples grow,
Where beneath another sky
Parrot-islands anchored lie."

HONG-KONG was so much alive, so built, so lighted, and so bloatedly rich to all outward appearance that I wanted to know how these things came about. You can't lavish granite by the cubic ton for nothing, or rivet your cliffs with Portland cement, or build a five-mile bund, or establish a club like a small palace. I sought a *Taipan*, which means the head of an English trading firm. He was the biggest *Taipan* on the island, and quite the nicest. He owned ships and wharves and houses and mines and a hundred other things. To him said I:—

"O *Taipan*, I am a poor person from Calcutta, and the liveliness of your place astounds me. How is it that every one smells of money; whence come your municipal improvements; and why are the White Men so restless?"

Said the *Taipan*: "It is because the island is going ahead mightily. Because everything pays. Observe this share-list."

He took me down a list of thirty or less companies — steam-launch companies, mining, rope-weaving, dock, trading, agency and general companies — and with five exceptions all the shares were at premium — some a hundred, some five hundred, and others only fifty.

"It is not a boom," said the *Taipan*. "It is genuine. Nearly every man you meet in these parts is a broker, and he floats companies."

I looked out of the window and beheld how companies were floated. Three men with their hats on the back of their heads converse for ten minutes. To these enters a fourth with a pocket-book. Then all four dive into the Hong-Kong Hotel for material wherewith to float themselves and — there is your company.

"From these things," said the *Taipan*, "comes the wealth of Hong-Kong. Every notion here pays, from the dairy-farm upwards. We have passed through our bad times and come to the fat years."

He told me tales of the old times — pityingly because he knew I could not understand. All I could tell was that the place dressed by America — from the hair-cutters' saloons to the liquor-bars. The faces of men were turned to the Golden Gate even while they floated most of the Singapur companies. There is not sufficient push in Singapur alone, so Hong-Kong helps. Circulars of new companies lay on the bank counters. I moved amid a maze of interests that I could not comprehend, and spoke to men whose minds were at Hankow, Foochoo, Amoy, or even further — beyond the Yangtze gorges where the Englishman trades.

After a while I escaped from the company-floaters because I knew I could not understand them, and ran

up a hill. Hong-Kong is all hill except when the fog shuts out everything except the sea. Tree ferns sprouted on the ground and azaleas mixed with the ferns, and there were bamboos over all. Consequently it was only natural that I should find a tramway that stood on its head and waved its feet in the mist. They called it the Victoria Gap Tramway and hauled it up with a rope. It ran up a hill into space at an angle of 65°, and to those who have seen the Rigi, Mount Washington, a switch-back railway, and the like would not have been impressive. But neither you nor I have ever been hauled from Annandale to the Chaura Maidàn in a bee-line with a five-hundred-foot drop on the off-side, and we are at liberty to marvel. It is not proper to run up inclined ways at the tail of a string, more especially when you cannot see two yards in front of you and all earth below is a swirling cauldron of mist. Nor, unless you are warned of the opticalness of the delusion, is it nice to see from your seat, houses and trees at magic-lantern angles. Such things, before tiffin, are worse than the long roll of the China seas.

They turned me out twelve hundred feet above the city on the military road to Dalhousie, as it will be when India has a surplus. Then they brought me a glorified dandy which, not knowing any better, they called a chair. Except that it is too long to run corners easily, a chair is vastly superior to a dandy. It is more like a Bombay side *tonjon* — the kind we use at Mahableshwar. You sit in a wicker chair, slung low on ten feet of elastic wooden shafting, and there are light blinds against the rain.

"We are now," said the Professor, as he wrung out his hat gemmed with the dews of the driving mist, "we are

now on a pleasure trip. This is the road to Chakrata in the rains."

"Nay," said I; "it is from Solon to Kasauli that we are going. Look at the black rocks."

"Bosh!" said the Professor. "This is a civilised country. Look at the road, look at the railings — look at the gutters."

And as I hope never to go to Solon again, the road was cemented, the railings were of iron mortised into granite blocks, and the gutters were paved. 'Twas no wider than a hill-path, but if it had been the Viceroy's pet promenade it could not have been better kept. There was no view. That was why the Professor had taken his camera. We passed coolies widening the road, and houses shut up and deserted, solid squat little houses made of stone, with pretty names after our hill-station custom — Townend, Craggylands, and the like — and at these things my heart burned within me. Hong-Kong has no right to mix itself up with Mussoorie in this fashion. We came to the meeting-place of the winds, eighteen hundred feet above all the world, and saw forty miles of clouds. That was the Peak — the great view-place of the island. A laundry on a washing day would have been more interesting.

"Let us go down, Professor," said I, "and we'll get our money back. This isn't a view."

We descended by the marvellous tramway, each pretending to be as little upset as the other, and started in pursuit of a Chinese burying-ground.

"Go to the Happy Valley," said an expert. "The Happy Valley, where the racecourse and the cemeteries are."

"It's Mussoorie," said the Professor. "I knew it all along."

It was Mussoorie, though we had to go through a half-mile of Portsmouth Hard first. Soldiers grinned at us from the verandahs of their most solid three-storied barracks; all the blue-jackets of all the China squadron were congregated in the Royal Navy Seaman's Club, and they beamed upon us. The blue-jacket is a beautiful creature, and very healthy, but . . . I gave my heart to Thomas Atkins long ago, and him I love.

By the way, how is it that a Highland regiment — the Argyll and Southerlandshire for instance — get such good recruits? Do the kilt and sporran bring in brawny youngsters of five-foot nine, and thirty-nine inch round the chest? The Navy draws well-built men also. How is it that Our infantry regiments fare so badly?

We came to the Happy Valley by way of a monument to certain dead Englishmen. Such things cease to move emotion after a little while. They are but the seed of the great harvest whereof our children's children shall assuredly reap the fruits. The men were killed in a fight, or by disease. We hold Hong-Kong, and by Our strength and wisdom it is a great city, built upon a rock, and furnished with a dear little seven-furlong racecourse set in the hills, and fringed as to one side with the homes of the dead — Mahometan, Christian, and Parsee. A wall of bamboos shuts off the course and the grand-stand from the cemeteries. It may be good enough for Hong-Kong, but would you care to watch your pony running with a grim reminder of "gone to the drawer" not fifty feet behind you? Very beauti-

ful are the cemeteries, and very carefully tended. The rocky hillside rises so near to them that the more recent dead can almost command a view of the racing as they lie. Even this far from the strife of the Churches they bury the different sects of Christians apart. One creed paints its wall white, and the other blue. The latter, as close to the race-stand as may be, writes in straggling letters, "*Hodie mihi cras tibi.*" No, I should *not* care to race in Hong-Kong. The scornful assemblage behind the grand-stand would be enough to ruin any luck.

Chinamen do not approve of showing their cemeteries. We hunted ours from ledge to ledge of the hillsides, through crops and woods and crops again, till we came to a village of black and white pigs and riven red rocks beyond which the dead lay. It was a third-rate place, but was pretty. I have studied that oilskin mystery, the Chinaman, for at least five days, and why he should elect to be buried in good scenery, and by what means he knows good scenery when he sees it, I cannot fathom. But he gets it when the sight is taken from him, and his friends fire crackers above him in token of the triumph.

That night I dined with the *Taipan* in a palace. They say the merchant prince of Calcutta is dead — killed by exchange. Hong-Kong ought to be able to supply one or two samples. The funny thing in the midst of all this wealth — wealth such as one reads about in novels — is to hear the curious deference that is paid to Calcutta. Console yourselves with that, gentlemen of the Ditch, for by my faith, it is the one thing that you can boast of. At this dinner I learned that Hong-Kong was impregnable and that China was rapidly importing twelve and

forty ton guns for the defence of her coasts. The one statement I doubted, but the other was truth. Those who have occasion to speak of China in these parts do so deferentially, as who should say: "Germany intends such and such," or "These are the views of Russia." The very men who talk thus are doing their best to force upon the great Empire all the stimulants of the West-railways, tram lines, and so forth. What will happen when China really wakes up, runs a line from Shanghai to Lhassa, starts another line of imperial Yellow Flag immigrant steamers, and really works and controls her own gun-factories and arsenals? The energetic Englishmen who ship the forty-tonners are helping to this end, but all they say is: "We're well paid for what we do. There's no sentiment in business, and anyhow, China will never go to war with England." Indeed, there is no sentiment in business. The *Taipan's* palace, full of all things beautiful, and flowers more lovely than the gem-like cabinets they adorned, would have made happy half a hundred young men craving for luxury, and might have made them writers, singers, and poets. It was inhabited by men with big heads and straight eyes, who sat among the splendours and talked business.

If I were not going to be a Burman when I die I would be a *Taipan* at Hong-Kong. He knows so much and he deals so largely with Princes and Powers, and he has a flag of his very own which he pins on to all his steamers.

The blessed chance that looks after travellers sent me next day on a picnic, and all because I happened to wander into the wrong house. This is quite true, and very like our Anglo-Indian ways of doing things.

"Perhaps," said the hostess, "this will be our only fine day. Let us spend it in a steam-launch."

Forthwith we embarked upon a new world — that of Hong-Kong harbour — and with a dramatic regard for the fitness of things our little ship was the *Pioneer*. The picnic included the new General — he that came from England in the *Nawab* and told me about Lord Wolseley — and his aide-de-camp, who was quite English and altogether different from an Indian officer. He never once talked shop, and if he had a grievance hid it behind his mustache.

The harbour is a great world in itself. Photographs say that it is lovely, and this I can believe from the glimpses caught through the mist as the *Pioneer* worked her way between the lines of junks, the tethered liners, the wallowing coal hulks, the trim, low-lying American corvette, the *Orontes*, huge and ugly, the *Cockchafer*, almost as small as its namesake, the ancient three-decker converted into a military hospital, — Thomas gets change of air thus, — and a few hundred thousand sampans manned by women with babies tied on to their backs. Then we swept down the sea face of the city and saw that it was great, till we came to an unfinished fort high up on the side of a green hill, and I watched the new General as men watch an oracle. Have I told you that he is an Engineer General, specially sent out to attend to the fortifications? He looked at the raw earth and the granite masonry, and there was keen professional interest in his eye. Perhaps he would say something. I edged nearer in that hope. He did: —

"Sherry and sandwiches? Thanks, I will. 'Stonishing how hungry the sea-air makes a man feel," quoth the

General; and we went along under the grey-green coast, looking at stately country houses made of granite, where Jesuit fathers and opulent merchants dwell. It was the Mashobra of this Simla. It was also the Highlands, it was also Devonshire, and it was specially grey and chilly.

Never did *Pioneer* circulate in stranger waters. On the one side was a bewildering multiplicity of islets; on the other, the deeply indented shores of the main island, sometimes running down to the sea in little sandy coves, at others falling sheer in cliff and sea-worn cave full of the boom of the breakers. Behind, rose the hills into the mist, the everlasting mist.

"We are going to Aberdeen," said the hostess; "then to Stanley, and then across the island on foot by way of the Ti-tam reservoir. That will show you a lot of the country."

We shot into a fiord and discovered a brown fishing village which kept sentry over two docks, and a Sikh policeman. All the inhabitants were rosy-cheeked women, each owning one-third of a boat, and a whole baby, wrapped up in red cloth and tied to the back. The mother was dressed in blue for a reason, — if her husband whacked her over the shoulders, he would run a fair chance of crushing the baby's head unless the infant were of a distinct colour.

Then we left China altogether, and steamed into far Lochaber, with a climate to correspond. Good people under the punkah, think for a moment of cloud-veiled headlands running out into a steel-grey sea, crisped with a cheek-rasping breeze that makes you sit down under the bulwarks and gasp for breath. Think of the merry

pitch and roll of a small craft as it buzzes from island to island, or venturously cuts across the mouth of a mile-wide bay, while you mature amid fresh scenery, fresh talk, and fresh faces, an appetite that shall uphold the credit of the great empire in a strange land. Once more we found a village which they called Stanley; but it was different from Aberdeen. Tenantless buildings of brown-stone stared seaward from the low downs, and there lay behind them a stretch of weather-beaten wall. No need to ask what these things meant. They cried aloud: "It is a deserted cantonment, and the population is in the cemetery."

"I asked, "What regiment?"

"The Ninety-second, I think," said the General. "But that was in the old times — in the Sixties. I believe they quartered a lot of troops here and built the barracks on the ground; and the fever carried all the men off like flies. Isn't it a desolate place?"

My mind went back to a neglected graveyard a stone's throw from Jehangir's tomb in the gardens of Shalimar, where the cattle and the cowherd look after the last resting-places of the troops who first occupied Lahore. We are a great people and very strong, but we build Our empire in a wasteful manner — on the bones of the dead that have died of disease.

"But about the fortifications, General? Is it true that etc., etc.?"

"The fortifications are right enough as things go; what we want is men."

"How many?"

"Say about three thousand for the Island — enough to stop any expedition that might come. Look at all these

little bays and coves. There are twenty places at the back of the island where you could land men and make things unpleasant for Hong-Kong."

"But," I ventured, "isn't it the theory that any organised expedition ought to be stopped by our fleet before it got here? Whereas the forts are supposed to prevent cutting out, shelling, and ransoming by a disconnected man-of-war or two."

"If you go on that theory," said the General, "the men-of-war ought to be stopped by our fleets, too. That's all nonsense. If any Power can throw troops here, you want troops to turn 'em out, and — don't we wish we may get them!"

"And you? Your command here is for five years, isn't it?"

"Oh, no! Eighteen months ought to see me out. I don't want to stick here for ever. I've other notions for myself," said the General, scrambling over the boulders to get at his tiffin.

And that is just the worst of it. Here was a nice General helping to lay out fortifications, with one eye on Hong-Kong and the other, his right one, on England. He would be more than human not to sell himself and his orders for the command of a brigade in the next English affair. He would be afraid of being too long away from home lest he should drop out of the running and . . . Well, we are just the same in India, and there is not the least hope of raising a Legion of the Lost for colonial service — of men who would do their work in one place for ever and look for nothing beyond it. But remember that Hong-Kong — with five million tons of coal, five miles of shipping, docks, wharves, huge civil

station, forty million pounds of trade, and the nicest picnic parties that you ever did see — wants three thousand men and — she won't get them. She has two batteries of garrison artillery, a regiment, and a lot of gun lascars — about enough to prevent the guns from rusting on their carriages. There are three forts on an island — Stonecutter's Island — between Hong-Kong and the mainland, three on Hong-Kong itself, and three or four scattered about elsewhere. Naturally the full complement of guns has not arrived. Even in India you cannot man forts without trained gunners. But tiffin under the lee of a rock was more interesting than colonial defence. A man cannot talk politics if he be empty.

Our one fine day shut in upon the empty plates in wind and rain, and the march across the island began.

As the launch was blotted out in the haze we squelched past sugar-cane crops and fat pigs, past the bleak cemetery of dead soldiers on the hill, across a section of moor, till we struck a hill-road above the sea. The views shifted and changed like a kaleidoscope. First a shaggy shoulder of land tufted with dripping rushes and naught above, beneath, or around but mist and the straight spikes of the rain; then red road swept by water that fell into the unknown; then a combe, straight walled almost as a house, at the bottom of which crawled the jade-green sea; then a vista of a bay, a bank of white sand, and a red-sailed junk beating out before the squall; then only wet rock and fern, and the voice of thunder calling from peak to peak.

A landward turn in the road brought us to the pine woods of Theog and the rhododendrons — but they called them azaleas — of Simla, and ever the rain fell as though

it had been July in the hills instead of April at Hong-Kong. An invading army marching upon Victoria would have a sad time of it even if the rain did not fall. There are but one or two gaps in the hills through which it could travel, and there is a scheme in preparation whereby they shall be cut off and annihilated when they come. When I had to climb a clay hill backwards digging my heels into the dirt, I very much pitied that invading army.

Whether the granite-faced reservoir and two-mile tunnel that supplies Hong-Kong with water be worth seeing I cannot tell. There was too much water in the air for comfort even when one tried to think of Home.

But go you and take the same walk — ten miles, and only two of 'em on level ground. Steam to the forsaken cantonment of Stanley and cross the island, and tell me whether you have seen anything so wild and wonderful in its way as the scenery. I am going up the river to Canton, and cannot stay for word-paintings.

No. X

SHOWS HOW I CAME TO GOBLIN MARKET AND TOOK A SCUNNER AT IT AND CURSED THE CHINESE PEOPLE. SHOWS FURTHER HOW I INITIATED ALL HONG-KONG INTO OUR FRATERNITY.

Providence is pleased to be sarcastic. It sent rain and a raw wind from the beginning till the end. That is one of the disadvantages of leaving India. You cut yourself adrift from the only trustworthy climate in the world. I despise a land that has to waste half its time in watching the clouds. The Canton trip (I have been that way) introduces you to the American river steamer, which is not in the least like one of the Irrawaddy flotilla or an omnibus, as many people believe. It is composed almost entirely of white paint, sheet-lead, a cow-horn, and a walking-beam, and holds about as much cargo as a P. and O. The trade between Canton and Hong-Kong seems to be immense, and a steamer covers the ninety miles between port and port daily. None the less are the Chinese passengers daily put under hatches or its equivalent after they leave port, and daily is the stand of loaded Sniders in the cabin inspected and cleaned up. Daily, too, I should imagine, the captain of each boat tells his Globe-trotting passengers the venerable story of the looting of a river steamer — how two junks fouled her at a convenient bend in the

river, while the native passengers on her rose and made things very lively for the crew, and ended by clearing out that steamer. The Chinese are a strange people! They had a difficulty at Hong-Kong not very long ago about photographing labour coolies, and in the excitement, which was considerable, a rickety old war junk got into position off the bund with the avowed intention of putting a three-pound shot through the windows of the firm who had suggested the photographing. And this though vessel and crew could have been blown in cigarette-ash in ten minutes!

But no one pirated the *Ho-nam*, though the passengers did their best to set her on fire by upsetting the lamps of their opium pipes. She blared her unwieldy way across the packed shipping of the harbour and ran into grey mist and driving rain. When I say that the scenery was like the West Highlands you will by this time understand what I mean. Large screw steamers, China pig-boats very low in the water and choked with live-stock, wallowing junks and ducking sampans filled the waterways of a stream as broad as the Hughli and much better defended as far as the art of man was concerned. Their little difficulty with the French a few years ago has taught the Chinese a great many things which, perhaps, it were better for us that they had left alone.

The first striking object of Canton city is the double tower of the big Catholic Church. Take off your hat to this because it means a great deal, and stands as the visible standard of a battle that has yet to be fought. Never have the missionaries of the Mother of the Churches wrestled so mightily with any land as with China, and never has nation so scientifically tortured the mis-

sionary as has China. Perhaps when the books are audited somewhere else, each race, the White and the Yellow, will be found to have been right according to their lights.

I had taken one fair look at the city from the steamer, and threw up my cards. "I can't describe this place, and besides, I hate Chinamen."

"Bosh! It is only Benares, magnified about eight times. Come along."

It was Benares, without any wide streets or chauks, and yet darker than Benares, in that the little skyline was entirely blocked by tier on tier of hanging signs,—red, gold, black, and white. The shops stood on granite plinths, pukka brick above, and tile-roofed. Their fronts were carved wood, gilt, and coloured savagely. John knows how to dress a shop, though he may sell nothing more lovely than smashed fowl and chitterlings. Every other shop was a restaurant, and the space between them crammed with humanity. Do you know those horrible sponges full of worms that grow in warm seas? You break off a piece of it and the worms break too. Canton was that sponge. "Hi, low yah. To hoh wang!" yelled the chair-bearers to the crowd, but I was afraid that if the poles chipped the corner of a house the very bricks would begin to bleed. Hong-Kong showed me how the Chinaman could work. Canton explained why he set no value on life. The article was cheaper than in India. I hated the Chinaman before; I hated him doubly as I choked for breath in his seething streets where nothing short of the pestilence could clear a way. There was of course no incivility from the people, but the mere mob was terrifying. There are three

or four places in the world where it is best for an Englishman to agree with his adversary swiftly, whatever the latter's nationality may be. Canton heads the list. Never argue with anybody in Canton. Let the guide do it for you. Then the stinks rose up and overwhelmed us. In this respect Canton was Benares twenty times magnified. The Hindu is a sanitating saint compared to the Chinaman. He is a rigid Malthusian in the same regard.

"Very bad stink, this place. You come right along," said Ah Cum, who had learned his English from Americans. He was very kind. He showed me feather-jewellery shops where men sat pinching from the gorgeous wings of jays, tiny squares of blue and lilac feathers, and pasting them into gold settings, so that the whole looked like Jeypore enamel of the rarest. But we went into a shop. Ah Cum drew us inside the big door and bolted it, while the crowd blocked up the windows and shutter-bars. I thought more of the crowd than the jewellery. The city was so dark and the people were so very many and so unhuman.

The March of the Mongol is a pretty thing to write about in magazines. Hear it once in the gloom of an ancient curio shop, where nameless devils of the Chinese creed make mouths at you from back-shelves, where brazen dragons, revelations of uncleanliness, all catch your feet as you stumble across the floor — hear the tramp of the feet on the granite blocks of the road and the breaking wave of human speech, that is not human! Watch the yellow faces that glare at you between the bars, and you will be afraid, as I was afraid.

"It's beautiful work," said the Professor, bending over

a Cantonese petticoat — a wonder of pale green, blue, and silver. "Now I understand why the civilised European of Irish extraction kills the Chinaman in America. It is justifiable to kill him. It would be quite right to wipe the city of Canton off the face of the earth, and to exterminate all the people who ran away from the shelling. The Chinaman ought not to count."

I had gone off on my own train of thought, and it was a black and bitter one.

"Why on earth can't you look at the lions and enjoy yourself, and leave politics to the men who pretend to understand 'em?" said the Professor.

"It's no question of politics," I replied. "This people ought to be killed off because they are unlike any people I ever met before. Look at their faces. They despise us. You can see it, and they aren't a bit afraid of us either."

Then Ah Cum took us by ways that were dark to the temple of the Five Hundred Genii, which was one of the sights of the rabbit-warren. This was a Buddhist temple with the usual accessories of altars and altar lights and colossal figures of doorkeepers at the gates. Round the inner court runs a corridor lined on both sides with figures about half life-size, representing most of the races of Asia. Several of the Jesuit Fathers are said to be in that gallery, — you can find it all in the guide-books, — and there is one image of a jolly-looking soul in a hat and full beard, but, like the others, naked to the waist. "That European gentleman," said Ah Cum. "That Marco Polo." "Make the most of him," I said. "The time is coming when there will be no European gentlemen — nothing but yellow people with black hearts

— black hearts, Ah Cum — and a devil-born capacity for doing more work than they ought."

"Come and see a clock," said he. "Old clock. It runs by water. Come on right along." He took us to another temple and showed us an old water-clock of four *gurrahs:* just the same sort of thing as they have in out-of-the-way parts of India for the use of the watchmen. The Professor vows that the machine, which is supposed to give the time to the city, is regulated by the bells of the steamers in the river, Canton water being too thick to run through anything smaller than a half-inch pipe. From the pagoda of this temple we could see that the roofs of all the houses below were covered with filled water-jars. There is no sort of fire organisation in the city. When lighted it burns till it stops.

Ah Cum led us to the Potter's Field, where the executions take place. The Chinese slay by the hundred, and far be it from me to say that such generosity of bloodshed is cruel. They could afford to execute in Canton alone at the rate of ten thousand a year without disturbing the steady flow of population. An executioner who happened to be wandering about — perhaps in search of employment — offered us a sword under guarantee that it had cut off many heads. "Keep it," I said. "Keep it, and let the good work go on. My friend, you cannot execute too freely in this land. You are blessed, I apprehend, with a purely literary bureaucracy recruited — correct me if I am wrong — from all social strata, more especially those in which the idea of cold-blooded cruelty has, as it were, become embedded. Now, when to inherited devildom is superadded a purely literary education of grim and formal tendencies, the result,

my evil-looking friend, — the result, I repeat, — is a state of affairs which is faintly indicated in the Little Pilgrim's account of the Hell of Selfishness. You, I presume, have not yet read the works of the Little Pilgrim."

"He looks as if he was going to cut at you with that sword," said the Professor. "Come away and see the Temple of Horrors."

That was a sort of Chinese Madame Tussaud's — life-like models of men being brayed in mortars, sliced, fried, toasted, stuffed, and variously bedevilled — that made me sick and unhappy. But the Chinese are merciful even in their tortures. When a man is ground in a mill, he is, according to the models, popped in head first. This is hard on the crowd who are waiting to see the fun, but it saves trouble to the executioners. A half-ground man has to be carefully watched, or else he wriggles out of his place. To crown all, we went to the prison, which was a pest-house in a back street. The Professor shuddered. "It's all right," I said. "The people who sent the prisoners here don't care. The men themselves look hideously miserable, but I suppose they don't care, and goodness knows I don't care. They are only Chinamen. If they treat each other like dogs, why should we regard 'em as human beings? Let 'em rot. I want to get back to the steamer. I want to get under the guns of Hong-Kong. Phew!"

Then we ran through a succession of second-rate streets and houses till we reached the city wall on the west by a long flight of steps. It was clean here. The wall had a drop of thirty or forty feet to paddy fields. Beyond these were a semicircle of hills, every square

yard of which is planted out with graves. Her dead watch Canton the abominable, and the dead are more than the myriads living. On the grass-grown top of the wall were rusty English guns spiked and abandoned after the war. They ought not to be there. A five-storied pagoda gave us a view of the city, but I was wearied of these rats in their pit — wearied and scared and sullen. The excellent Ah Cum led us to the Viceroy's summer garden-house on the cityward slope of an azalea-covered hill surrounded by cotton trees. The basement was a handsome joss house: upstairs was a durbar-hall with glazed verandahs and ebony furniture ranged across the room in four straight lines. It was only an oasis of cleanliness. Ten minutes later we were back in the swarming city, cut off from light and sweet air. Once or twice we met a mandarin with thin official mustache and "little red button a-top." Ah Cum was explaining the nature and properties of a mandarin when we came to a canal spanned by an English bridge and closed by an iron gate, which was in charge of a Hong-Kong policeman. We were in an Indian station with Europe shops and Parsee shops and everything else to match. This was English Canton, with two hundred and fifty sahibs in it. 'Twould have been better for a Gatling behind the bridge gate. The guide-books tell you that it was taken from the Chinese by the treaty of 1860, the French getting a similar slice of territory. Owing to the binding power of French officialism, "La concession Française" has never been let or sold to private individuals, and now a Chinese regiment squats on it. The men who travel tell you somewhat similar tales about land in Saigon and Cambodia. Something

seems to attack a Frenchman as soon as he dons a colonial uniform. Let us call it the red-tape-worm.

"Now where did you go and what did you see?" said the Professor, in the style of the pedagogue, when we were once more on the *Ho-nam* and returning as fast as steam could carry us to Hong-Kong.

"A big blue sink of a city full of tunnels, all dark and inhabited by yellow devils, a city that Doré ought to have seen. I'm devoutly thankful that I'm never going back there. The Mongol will begin to march in his own good time. I intend to wait until he marches up to me. Let us go away to Japan by the next boat."

The Professor says that I have completely spoiled the foregoing account by what he calls "intemperate libels on a hard-working nation." He did not see Canton as I saw it — through the medium of a fevered imagination.

Once, before I got away, I climbed to the civil station of Hong-Kong, which overlooks the town. There in sumptuous stone villas built on the edge of the cliff and facing shaded roads, in a wilderness of beautiful flowers and a hushed calm unvexed even by the roar of the traffic below, the residents do their best to imitate the life of an India up-country station. They are better off than we are. At the bandstand the ladies dress all in one piece — shoes, gloves, and umbrellas come out from England with the dress, and every *memsahib* knows what that means — but the mechanism of their life is much the same. In one point they are superior. The ladies have a club of their very own to which, I believe, men are only allowed to come on sufferance. At a dance there are about twenty men to one lady, and there are practically no spinsters in the island. The inhabitants complain

of being cooped in and shut up. They look at the sea below them and they long to get away. They have their "At Homes" on regular days of the week, and everybody meets everybody else again and again. They have amateur theatricals and they quarrel and all the men and women take sides, and the station is cleaved asunder from the top to the bottom. Then they become reconciled and write to the local papers condemning the local critic's criticism. Isn't it touching? A lady told me these things one afternoon, and I nearly wept from sheer home-sickness.

"And then, you know, after she had said *that* he was obliged to give the part to the other, and that made *them* furious, and the races were so near that nothing could be done, and Mrs. —— said that it was altogether impossible. You understand how very unpleasant it must have been, do you not?"

"Madam," said I, "I do. I have been there before. My heart goes out to Hong-Kong. In the name of the great Indian Mofussil I salute you. Henceforward Hong-Kong is one of Us, ranking before Meerut, but after Allahabad, at all public ceremonies and parades."

I think she fancied I had sunstroke; but you at any rate will known what I mean.

We do not laugh any more on the P. and O. S. S. *Ancona* on the way to Japan. We are deathly sick, because there is a cross-sea beneath us and a wet sail above. The sail is to steady the ship who refuses to be steadied. She is full of Globe-trotters who also refuse to be steadied. A Globe-trotter is extreme cosmopolitan. He will be sick anywhere.

No. XI

OF JAPAN AT TEN HOURS' SIGHT, CONTAINING A COMPLETE ACCOUNT OF THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF ITS PEOPLE, A HISTORY OF ITS CONSTITUTION, PRODUCTS, ART, AND CIVILISATION, AND OMITTING A TIFFIN IN A TEA-HOUSE WITH O-TOYO.

> "Thou canst not wave thy staff in air
> Or dip thy paddle in the lake,
> But it carves the bow of beauty there,
> And ripples in rhyme the oar forsake."

This morning, after the sorrows of the rolling night, my cabin porthole showed me two great grey rocks studded and streaked with green and crowned by two stunted blue-black pines. Below the rocks a boat, that might have been carved sandal wood for colour and delicacy, was shaking out an ivory-white frilled sail to the wind of the morning. An indigo-blue boy with an old ivory face hauled on a rope. Rock and tree and boat made a panel from a Japanese screen, and I saw that the land was not a lie. This "good brown earth" of ours has many pleasures to offer her children, but there be few in her gift comparable to the joy of touching a new country, a completely strange race, and manners contrary. Though libraries may have been written aforetime, each new beholder is to himself another Cortez. And I was in Japan — the Japan of cabinets and joinery,

gracious folk and fair manners. Japan, whence the camphor and the lacquer and the shark-skin swords come: among what was it the books said? — a nation of artists. To be sure, we should only stop at Nagasaki for twelve hours ere going on to Kobé, but in twelve hours one can pack away a very fair collection of new experiences.

An execrable man met me on the deck, with a pale-blue pamphlet fifty pages thick. "Have you," said he, "seen the Constitution of Japan? The Emperor made it himself only the other day. It is on entirely European lines."

I took the pamphlet and found a complete paper Constitution stamped with the Imperial Chrysanthemum — an excellent little scheme of representation, reforms, payment of members, budget estimates, and legislation. It is a terrible thing to study at close quarters, because it is so pitifully English.

There was a yellow-shot greenness upon the hills round Nagasaki different, so my willing mind was disposed to believe, from the green of other lands. It was the green of a Japanese screen, and the pines were screen pines. The city itself hardly showed from the crowded harbour. It lay low among the hills, and its business face — a grimy bund — was sloppy and deserted. Business, I was rejoiced to learn, was at a low ebb in Nagasaki. The Japanese should have no concern with business. Close to one of the still wharves lay a ship of the Bad People; a Russian steamer down from Vladivostok. Her decks were cumbered with raffle of all kinds; her rigging was as frowsy and draggled as the hair of a lodging-house slavey, and her sides were filthy.

"That," said a man of my people, "is a very fair specimen of a Russian. You should see their men-of-war; they are just as filthy. Some of 'em come into Nagasaki to clean."

It was a small piece of information and perhaps untrue, but it put the roof to my good humour as I stepped on to the bund and was told in faultless English by a young gentleman, with a plated chrysanthemum in his forage cap and badly fitting German uniform on his limbs, that he did not understand my language. He was a Japanese customs official. Had our stay been longer, I would have wept over him because he was a hybrid — partly French, partly German, and partly American — a tribute to civilisation. All the Japanese officials from police upwards seem to be clad in Europe clothes, and never do those clothes fit. I think the Mikado made them at the same time as the Constitution. They will come right in time.

When the 'rickshaw, drawn by a beautiful apple-cheeked young man with a Basque face, shot me into the *Mikado*, First Act, I did not stop and shout with delight, because the dignity of India was in my keeping. I lay back on the velvet cushions and grinned luxuriously at Pittising, with her sash and three giant hair-pins in her blue-black hair, and three-inch clogs on her feet. She laughed — even as did the Burmese girl in the old Pagoda at Moulmein. And her laugh, the laugh of a lady, was my welcome to Japan. Can the people help laughing? I think not. You see they have such thousands of children in their streets that the elders must perforce be young lest the babes should grieve. Nagasaki is inhabited entirely by children. The grown-ups exist on sufferance.

A four-foot child walks with a three-foot child, who is holding the hand of a two-foot child, who carries on her back a one-foot child, who — but you will not believe me if I say that the scale runs down to six-inch little Jap dolls such as they used to sell in the Burlington Arcade. These dolls wriggle and laugh. They are tied up in a blue bed-gown which is tied by a sash, which again ties up the bed-gown of the carrier. Thus if you untie that sash, baby and but little bigger brother are at once perfectly naked. I saw a mother do this, and it was for all the world like the peeling of hard-boiled eggs.

If you look for extravagance of colour, for flaming shop fronts and glaring lanterns, you shall find none of these things in the narrow stone-paved streets of Nagasaki. But if you desire details of house construction, glimpses of perfect cleanliness, rare taste, and perfect subordination of the thing made to the needs of the maker, you shall find all you seek and more. All the roofs are dull lead colour, being shingled or tiled, and all the house fronts are of the colour of the wood God made. There is neither smoke nor haze, and in the clear light of a clouded sky I could see down the narrowest alleyway as into the interior of a cabinet.

The books have long ago told you how a Japanese house is constructed, chiefly of sliding screens and paper partitions, and everybody knows the story of the burglar of Tokio who burgled with a pair of scissors for jimmy and centrebit and stole the Consul's trousers. But all the telling in print will never make you understand the exquisite finish of a tenement that you could kick in with your foot and pound to match-wood with your fists. Behold a *bunnia's* shop. He sells rice and chillies and dried

fish and wooden scoops made of bamboo. The front of his shop is very solid. It is made of half-inch battens nailed side by side. Not one of the battens is broken; and each one is foursquare perfectly. Feeling ashamed of himself for this surly barring up of his house, he fills one-half the frontage with oiled paper stretched upon quarter-inch framing. Not a single square of oil paper has a hole in it, and not one of the squares, which in more uncivilised countries would hold a pane of glass if strong enough, is out of line. And the *bunnia*, clothed in a blue dressing-gown, with thick white stockings on his feet, sits behind, not among his wares, on a pale gold-coloured mat of soft rice straw bound with black list at the edges. This mat is two inches thick, three feet wide and six long. You might, if you were a sufficient pig, eat your dinner off any portion of it. The *bunnia* lies with one wadded blue arm round a big brazier of hammered brass on which is faintly delineated in incised lines a very terrible dragon. The brazier is full of charcoal ash, but there is no ash on the mat. By the *bunnia's* side is a pouch of green leather tied with a red silk cord, holding tobacco cut fine as cotton. He fills a long black and red lacquered pipe, lights it at the charcoal in the brazier, takes two whiffs, and the pipe is empty. Still there is no speck on the mat. Behind the *bunnia* is a shadow-screen of bead and bamboo. This veils a room floored with pale gold and roofed with panels of grained cedar. There is nothing in the room save a blood-red blanket laid out smoothly as a sheet of paper. Beyond the room is a passage of polished wood, so polished that it gives back the reflections of the white paper wall. At the end of the passage and clearly visible to

this unique *bunnia* is a dwarfed pine two feet high in a green glazed pot, and by its side is a branch of azalea, blood red as the blanket, set in a pale grey crackle-pot. The *bunnia* has put it there for his own pleasure, for the delight of his eyes, because he loves it. The white man has nothing whatever to do with his tastes, and he keeps his house specklessly pure because he likes cleanliness and knows it is artistic. What shall we say to such a *bunnia?*

His brother in Northern India may live behind a front of time-blackened open-work wood, but . . . I do not think he would grow anything save tulsi in a pot, and that only to please the Gods and his womenfolk.

Let us not compare the two men, but go on through Nagasaki.

Except for the horrible policemen who insist on being continental, the people — the common people, that is — do not run after unseemly costumes of the West. The young men wear round felt hats, occasionally coats and trousers, and semi-occasionally boots. All these are vile. In the more metropolitan towns men say Western dress is rather the rule than the exception. If this be so, I am disposed to conclude that the sins of their forefathers in making enterprising Jesuit missionaries into beefsteak have been visited on the Japanese in the shape of a partial obscuration of their artistic instincts. Yet the punishment seems rather too heavy for the offence.

Then I fell admiring the bloom on the people's cheeks, the three-cornered smiles of the fat babes, and the surpassing "otherness" of everything round me. It is so strange to be in a clean land, and stranger to walk among doll's houses. Japan is a soothing place for a

small man. Nobody comes to tower over him, and he looks down upon all the women, as is right and proper. A dealer in curiosities bent himself double on his own door-mat, and I passed in, feeling for the first time that I was a barbarian, and no true Sahib. The slush of the streets was thick on my boots, and he, the immaculate owner, asked me to walk across a polished floor and white mats to an inner chamber. He brought me a foot-mat, which only made matters worse, for a pretty girl giggled round the corner as I toiled at it. Japanese shopkeepers ought not to be so clean. I went into a boarded passage about two feet wide, found a gem of a garden of dwarfed trees, in the space of half a tennis court, whacked my head on a fragile lintel, and arrived at a four-walled daintiness where I involuntarily lowered my voice. Do you recollect Mrs. Molesworth's *Cuckoo Clock*, and the big cabinet that Griselda entered with the cuckoo? I was not Griselda, but my low-voiced friend, in his long, soft wraps, was the cuckoo, and the room was the cabinet. Again I tried to console myself with the thought that I could kick the place to pieces; but this only made me feel large and coarse and dirty, — a most unfavourable mood for bargaining. The cuckoo-man caused pale tea to be brought, — just such tea as you read of in books of travel, — and the tea completed my embarrassment. What I wanted to say was, "Look here, you person. You're much too clean and refined for this life here below, and your house is unfit for a man to live in until he has been taught a lot of things which I have never learned. Consequently I hate you because I feel myself your inferior, and you despise me and my boots because you know me for a savage. Let

me go, or I'll pull your house of cedar-wood over your ears." What I really said was, "Oh, ah yes. Awf'ly pretty. Awful queer way of doing business."

The cuckoo-man proved to be a horrid extortioner; but I was hot and uncomfortable till I got outside, and was a bog-trotting Briton once more. You have never blundered into the inside of a three-hundred-dollar cabinet, therefore you will not understand me.

We came to the foot of a hill, as it might have been the hill on which the Shway Dagon stands, and up that hill ran a mighty flight of grey, weather-darkened steps, spanned here and there by monolithic *torii*. Every one knows what a *torii* is. They have them in Southern India. A great King makes a note of the place where he intends to build a huge arch, but being a King does so in stone, not ink — sketches in the air two beams and a cross-bar, forty or sixty feet high, and twenty or thirty wide. In Southern India the cross-bar is humped in the middle. In the Further East it flares up at the ends. This description is hardly according to the books, but if a man begins by consulting books in a new country he is lost. Over the steps hung heavy blue-green or green-black pines, old, gnarled, and bossed. The foliage of the hillside was a lighter green, but the pines set the keynote of colour, and the blue dresses of the few folk on the steps answered it. There was no sunshine in the air, but I vow that sunshine would have spoilt all. We climb for five minutes, — I and the Professor and the camera, — and then we turned, and saw the roofs of Nagasaki lying at our feet — a sea of lead and dull-brown, with here and there a smudge of creamy pink to mark the bloom of the cherry trees. The hills round the

town were speckled with the resting-places of the dead, with clumps of pine and feathery bamboo.

"What a country!" said the Professor, unstrapping his camera. "And have you noticed, wherever we go there's always some man who knows how to carry my kit? The *ghari* driver at Moulmein handed me the stops; the fellow at Penang knew all about it, too; and the 'rickshaw coolie has seen a camera before. Curious, isn't it?"

"Professor," said I, "it's due to the extraordinary fact that we are not the only people in the world. I began to realise it at Hong-Kong. It's getting plainer now. I shouldn't be surprised if we turned out to be ordinary human beings, after all."

We entered a courtyard where an evil-looking bronze horse stared at two stone lions, and a company of children babbled among themselves. There is a legend connected with the bronze horse, which may be found in the guide-books. But the real true story of the creature is, that he was made long ago out of the fossil ivory of Siberia by a Japanese Prometheus, and got life and many foals, whose descendants closely resemble their father. Long years have almost eliminated the ivory in the blood, but it crops out in creamy mane and tail; and the pot-belly and marvellous feet of the bronze horse may be found to this day among the pack-ponies of Nagasaki, who carry pack-saddles adorned with velvet and red cloth, who wear grass shoes on their hind feet, and who are made like to horses in a pantomime.

We could not go beyond this courtyard because a label said, "No admittance," and thus all we saw of the temple was rich-brown high roofs of blackened thatch,

breaking back and back in wave and undulation till they were lost in the foliage. The Japanese can play with thatch as men play with modelling clay, but how their light underpinnings can carry the weight of the roof is a mystery to the lay eye.

We went down the steps to tiffin, and a half-formed resolve was shaping itself in my heart the while. Burma was a very nice place, but they eat *gnapi* there, and there were smells, and after all, the girls weren't so pretty as some others —

"You must take off your boots," said Y-Tokai.

I assure you there is no dignity in sitting down on the steps of a tea-house and struggling with muddy boots. And it is impossible to be polite in your stockinged feet when the floor under you is as smooth as glass and a pretty girl wants to know where you would like tiffin. Take at least one pair of beautiful socks with you when you come this way. Get them made of embroidered *sambhur* skin, of silk if you like, but do not stand as I did in cheap striped brown things with a darn at the heel, and try to talk to a tea-girl.

They led us — three of them, and all fresh and pretty — into a room furnished with a golden-brown bearskin. The *tokonoma*, recess aforementioned, held one scroll-picture of bats wheeling in the twilight, a bamboo flower-holder, and yellow flowers. The ceiling was of panelled wood, with the exception of one strip at the side nearest the window, and this was made of plaited shavings of cedar-wood, marked off from the rest of the ceiling by a wine-brown bamboo so polished that it might have been lacquered. A touch of the hand sent one side of the room flying back, and we entered a really large room

with another *tokonoma* framed on one side by eight or ten feet of an unknown wood, bearing the same grain as a Penang lawyer, and above by a stick of unbarked tree set there purely because it was curiously mottled. In this second *tokonoma* was a pearl-grey vase, and that was all. Two sides of the room were of oiled paper, and the joints of the beams were covered by the brazen images of crabs, half life-size. Save for the sill of the *tokonoma*, which was black lacquer, every inch of wood in the place was natural grain without flaw. Outside was the garden, fringed with a hedge of dwarf-pines and adorned with a tiny pond, water-smoothed stones sunk in the soil, and a blossoming cherry tree.

They left us alone in this paradise of cleanliness and beauty, and being only a shameless Englishman without his boots — a white man is always degraded when he goes barefoot — I wandered round the wall, trying all the screens. It was only when I stopped to examine the sunk catch of a screen that I saw it was a plaque of inlay work representing two white cranes feeding on fish. The whole was about three inches square and in the ordinary course of events would never be looked at. The screens are a cupboard in which all the lamps and candlesticks and pillows and sleeping-bags of the household seemed to be stored. An Oriental nation that can fill a cupboard tidily is a nation to bow down to. Upstairs I went by a staircase of grained wood and lacquer into rooms of rarest device with circular windows that opened on nothing, and so were filled with bamboo tracery for the delight of the eye. The passages floored with dark wood shone like ice, and I was ashamed.

"Professor," said I, "they don't spit; they don't eat

like pigs; they can't quarrel, and a drunken man would reel straight through every portion in the house and roll down the hill into Nagasaki. They can't have any children." Here I stopped. Downstairs was full of babies.

The maidens came in with tea in blue china and cake in a red lacquered bowl — such cake as one gets at one or two houses in Simla. We sprawled ungracefully on red rugs over the mats, and they gave us chopsticks to separate the cake with. It was a long task.

"Is that all?" growled the Professor. "I'm hungry, and cake and tea oughtn't to come till four o'clock." Here he took a wedge of cake furtively with his hands.

They returned — five of them this time — with black lacquer stands a foot square and four inches high. Those were our tables. They bore a red lacquered bowlful of fish boiled in brine, and sea-anemones. At least they were not mushrooms. A paper napkin tied with gold thread enclosed our chopsticks; and in a little flat saucer lay a smoked crayfish, a slice of a compromise that looked like Yorkshire pudding and tasted like sweet omelette, and a twisted fragment of some translucent thing that had once been alive but was now pickled. They went away, but not empty handed, for thou, oh, O-Toyo, didst take away my heart — same which I gave to the Burmese girl in the Shway Dagon pagoda.

The Professor opened his eyes a little, but said no word. The chopsticks demanded all his attention, and the return of the girls took up the rest. O-Toyo, ebon-haired, rosy-cheeked, and made throughout of delicate porcelain, laughed at me because I devoured all the mustard sauce that had been served with my raw fish,

and wept copiously till she gave me *saki* from a lordly bottle about four inches high. If you took some very thin hock, and tried to mull it and forgot all about the brew till it was half cold, you would get *saki*. I had mine in a saucer so tiny that I was bold to have it filled eight or ten times and loved O-Toyo none the less at the end.

After raw fish and mustard sauce came some other sort of fish cooked with pickled radishes, and very slippery on the chopsticks. The girls knelt in a semicircle and shrieked with delight at the Professor's clumsiness, for indeed it was not I that nearly upset the dinner table in a vain attempt to recline gracefully. After the bamboo-shoots came a basin of white beans in sweet sauce — very tasty indeed. Try to convey beans to your mouth with a pair of wooden knitting-needles and see what happens. Some chicken cunningly boiled with turnips, and a bowlful of snow-white boneless fish and a pile of rice, concluded the meal. I have forgotten one or two of the courses, but when O-Toyo handed me the tiny lacquered Japanese pipe full of hay-like tobacco, I counted nine dishes in the lacquer stand — each dish representing a course. Then O-Toyo and I smoked by alternate pipefuls.

My very respectable friends at all the clubs and messes, have you ever after a good tiffin lolled on cushions and smoked, with one pretty girl to fill your pipe and four to admire you in an unknown tongue? You do not know what life is. I looked round me at that faultless room, at the dwarf pines and creamy cherry blossoms without, at O-Toyo bubbling with laughter because I blew smoke through my nose, and at the ring of *Mikado* maidens over against the golden-brown bearskin rug. Here was

colour, form, food, comfort, and beauty enough for half a year's contemplation. I would not be a Burman any more. I would be a Japanese — always with O-Toyo *bien entendu* — in a cabinet workhouse on a camphor-scented hillside.

"Heigho!" said the Professor. "There are worse places than this to live and die in. D'you know our steamer goes at four? Let's ask for the bill and get away."

Now I have left my heart with O-Toyo under the pines. Perhaps I shall get it back at Kobé.

No. XII

A FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF JAPAN. THE INLAND SEA, AND GOOD COOKERY. THE MYSTERY OF PASSPORTS AND CONSULATES, AND CERTAIN OTHER MATTERS.

"Rome! Rome! Wasn't that the place where I got the good cigars?" — *Memoirs of a Traveller.*

Alas for the incompleteness of the written word! There was so much more that I meant to tell you about Nagasaki and the funeral procession that I found in her streets. You ought to have read about the wailing women in white who followed the dead man shut up in a wooden sedan chair that rocked on the shoulders of the bearers, while the bronze-hued Buddhist priest tramped on ahead, and the little boys ran alongside.

I had prepared in my mind moral reflections, purviews of political situations, and a complete essay on the future of Japan. Now I have forgotten everything except O-Toyo in the tea-garden.

From Nagasaki we — the P. and O. Steamer — are going to Kobé by way of the Inland Sea. That is to say, we have for the last twenty hours been steaming through a huge lake, studded as far as the eye can reach with islands of every size, from four miles long and two wide to little cocked-hat hummocks no bigger than a decent hayrick. Messrs. Cook and Son charge about one hundred rupees extra for the run through this part of the

world, but they do not know how to farm the beauties of nature. Under any skies the islands — purple, amber, grey, green, and black — are worth five times the money asked. I have been sitting for the last half-hour among a knot of whooping tourists, wondering how I could give you a notion of them. The tourists, of course, are indescribable. They say, "Oh my!" at thirty-second intervals, and at the end of five minutes call one to another: "Sa-ay, don't you think it's vurry much the same all along?" Then they play cricket with a broomstick till an unusually fair prospect makes them stop and shout "Oh my!" again. If there were a few more oaks and pines on the islands, the run would be three hundred miles of Naini Tal lake. But we are not near Naini Tal; for as the big ship drives down the alleys of water, I can see the heads of the breakers flying ten feet up the side of the echoing cliffs, albeit the sea is dead-still.

Now we have come to a stretch so densely populated with islands that all looks solid ground. We are running through broken water thrown up by the race of the tide round an outlying reef, and apparently are going to hit an acre of solid rock. Somebody on the bridge saves us, and we head out for another island, and so on, and so on, till the eye wearies of watching the nose of the ship swinging right and left, and the finite human soul, which, after all, cannot repeat "Oh my!" through a chilly evening, goes below. When you come to Japan — it can be done comfortably in three months, or even ten weeks — sail through this marvellous sea, and see how quickly wonder sinks to interest, and interest to apathy. We brought oysters with us from Nagasaki. I am much more interested in their appearance at dinner to-

night than in the shag-backed starfish of an islet that has just slidden by like a ghost upon the silver-grey waters, awakening under the touch of the ripe moon. Yes, it is a sea of mystery and romance, and the white sails of the junks are silver in the moonlight. But if the steward curries those oysters instead of serving them on the shell, all the veiled beauties of cliff and water-carven rock will not console me. To-day being the seventeenth of April, I am sitting in an ulster under a thick rug, with fingers so cold I can barely hold the pen. This emboldens me to ask how your thermantidotes are working. A mixture of steatite and kerosene is very good for creaking cranks, I believe, and if the coolie falls asleep, and you wake up in Hades, try not to lose your temper. I go to my oysters.

Two days later. This comes from Kobé (thirty hours from Nagasaki), the European portion of which is a raw American town. We walked down the wide, naked streets between houses of sham stucco, with Corinthian pillars of wood, wooden verandahs and piazzas, all stony grey beneath stony grey skies, and keeping guard over raw green saplings miscalled shade trees. In truth, Kobé is hideously American in externals. Even I, who have only seen pictures of America, recognised at once that it was Portland, Maine. It lives among hills, but the hills are all scalped, and the general impression is of out-of-the-wayness. Yet, ere I go further, let me sing the praises of the excellent M. Begeux, proprietor of the Oriental Hotel, upon whom be peace. His is a house where you can dine. He does not merely feed you. His coffee is the coffee of the beautiful France. For tea he gives you Peliti cakes (but better) and the

vin ordinaire which is *compris*, is good. Excellent Monsieur and Madame Begeux! If the *Pioneer* were a medium for puffs, I would write a leading article upon your potato salad, your beefsteaks, your fried fish, and your staff of highly trained Japanese servants in blue tights, who looked like so many small Hamlets without the velvet cloak, and who obeyed the unspoken wish. No, it should be a poem — a ballad of good living. I have eaten curries of the rarest at the Oriental at Penang, the turtle steaks of Raffles's at Singapur still live in my regretful memory, and they gave me chicken liver and sucking-pig in the Victoria at Hong-Kong which I will always extol. But the Oriental at Kobé was better than all three. Remember this, and so shall you who come after slide round a quarter of the world upon a sleek and contented stomach.

We are going from Kobé to Yokohama by various roads. This necessitates a passport, because we travel in the interior and do not run round the coast on shipboard. We take a railroad, which may or may not be complete as to the middle, and we branch off from that railroad, complete or not, as the notion may prompt. This will be an affair of some twenty days, and ought to include forty or fifty miles by 'rickshaw, a voyage on a lake, and, I believe, bedbugs. *Nota bene.*—When you come to Japan stop at Hong-Kong and send on a letter to the "Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Tokio," if you want to travel in the interior of this Fairyland. Indicate your route as roughly as ever you choose, but for your own comfort give the two extreme towns you intend to touch. Throw in any details about your age, profession, colour of hair, and the like that

may occur to you, and ask to have a passport sent to the British Consulate at Kobé to meet you. Allow the man with a long title a week's time to prepare the passport, and you will find it at your service when you land. Only write distinctly, to save your vanity. My papers are addressed to a Mister Kyshrig — Radjerd Kyshrig.

As in Nagasaki, the town was full of babies, and as in Nagasaki, every one smiled except the Chinamen. I do not like Chinamen. There was something in their faces which I could not understand, though it was familiar enough.

"The Chinaman's a native," I said. "That's the look on a native's face, but the Jap isn't a native, and he isn't a sahib either. What is it?" The Professor considered the surging street for a while.

"The Chinaman's an old man when he's young, just as a native is, but the Jap is a child all his life. Think how grown-up people look among children. That's the look that's puzzling you."

I dare not say that the Professor is right, but to my eyes it seemed he spoke sooth. As the knowledge of good and evil sets its mark upon the face of a grown man of Our people, so something I did not understand had marked the faces of the Chinamen. They had no kinship with the crowd beyond that which a man has to children.

"They are the superior race," said the Professor, ethnologically.

"They can't be. They don't know how to enjoy life," I answered immorally. "And, anyway, their art isn't human."

"What does it matter?" said the Professor. "Here's

a shop full of the wrecks of old Japan. Let's go in and look." We went in, but I want somebody to solve the Chinese question for me. It's too large to handle alone.

We entered the curio-shop aforementioned, with our hats in our hands, through a small avenue of carved stone lanterns and wooden sculptures of devils unspeakably hideous, to be received by a smiling image who had grown grey among *netsukes* and lacquer. He showed us the banners and insignia of daimios long since dead, while our jaws drooped in ignorant wonder. He showed us a sacred turtle of mammoth size, carven in wood down to minutest detail. Through room after room he led us, the light fading as we went, till we reached a tiny garden and a woodwork cloister that ran round it. Suits of old-time armour made faces at us in the gloom, ancient swords clicked at our feet, quaint tobacco pouches as old as the swords swayed to and fro from some invisible support, and the eyes of a score of battered Buddhas, red dragons, Jain *tirthankars*, and Burmese *beloos* glared at us from over the fence of tattered gold brocade robes of state. The joy of possession lives in the eye. The old man showed us his treasures, from crystal spheres mounted in sea-worn wood to cabinet on cabinet full of ivory and wood carvings, and we were as rich as though we owned all that lay before us. Unfortunately the merest scratch of Japanese characters is the only clew to the artist's name, so I am unable to say who conceived, and in creamy ivory executed, the old man horribly embarrassed by a cuttle-fish; the priest who made the soldier pick up a deer for him and laughed to think that the brisket would be his and the burden his companion's; or the dry, lean snake coiled

in derision on a jawless skull mottled with the memories of corruption; or the Rabelaisan badger who stood on his head and made you blush though he was not half an inch long; or the little fat boy pounding his smaller brother; or the rabbit that had just made a joke; or — but there were scores of these notes, born of every mood of mirth, scorn, and experience that sways the heart of man; and by this hand that has held half a dozen of them in its palm I winked at the shade of the dead carver! He had gone to his rest, but he had worked out in ivory three or four impressions that I had been hunting after in cold print.

The Englishman is a wonderful animal. He buys a dozen of these things and puts them on the top of an overcrowded cabinet, where they look like blobs of ivory, and forgets them in a week. The Japanese hides them in a beautiful brocaded bag or a quiet lacquer box till three congenial friends come to tea. Then he takes them out slowly, and they are looked over with appreciation amid quiet chuckles to the deliberative clink of cups, and put back again till the mood for inspection returns. That is the way to enjoy what we call curios. Every man with money is a collector in Japan, but you shall find no crowds of "things" outside the best shops.

We stayed long in the half-light of that quaint place, and when we went away we grieved afresh that such a people should have a "constitution" or should dress every tenth young man in European clothes, put a white ironclad in Kobé harbour, and send a dozen myoptic lieutenants in baggy uniforms about the streets.

"It would pay us," said the Professor, his head in a clog-shop, "it would pay us to establish an inter-

national suzerainty over Japan to take, away any fear of invasion or annexation, and pay the country as much as ever it chose, on condition that it simply sat still and went on making beautiful things while our men learned. It would pay us to put the whole Empire in a glass case and mark it, '*Hors concours,*' Exhibit A."

"H'mm," said I. "Who's us?"

"Oh, we generally — the *Sahib log* all the world over. Our workmen — a few of them — can do as good work in certain lines, but you don't find whole towns full of clean, capable, dainty, designful people in Europe."

"Let's go to Tokio and speak to the Emperor about it," I said.

"Let's go to a Japanese theatre first," said the Professor. "It's too early in the tour to start serious politics."

No. XIII

THE JAPANESE THEATRE AND THE STORY OF THE THUNDER CAT. TREATING ALSO OF THE QUIET PLACES AND THE DEAD MAN IN THE STREET.

To the theatre we went, through the mud and much rain. Internally it was nearly dark, for the deep blue of the audience's dress soaked up the scanty light of the kerosene lamps. There was no standing room anywhere except next to the Japanese policeman, who in the cause of morals and the Lord Chamberlain had a corner in the gallery and four chairs all to himself. He was quite four feet eight inches high, and Napoleon at St. Helena could not have folded his arms more dramatically. After some grunting — I fear we were upsetting the principles of the Constitution — he consented to give us one chair, receiving in return a Burma cheroot which I have every reason to believe blew his little head off. A pit containing fifty rows of fifty people and a bonding layer of babies, with a gallery which might have held twelve hundred, made up the house. The building was as delicate a piece of cabinet work as any of the houses; roof, floor, beams, props, verandahs, and partitions were of naked wood, and every other person in the house was smoking a tiny pipe and knocking out the ashes every two minutes. Then I wished to fly; death by the *auto da fe* not being anywhere paid for in the tour; but there

was no escape by the one little door where pickled fish was being sold between the acts.

"Yes, it's not exactly safe," said the Professor, as the matches winked and sputtered all round and below. "But if that curtain catches that naked light on the stage, or you see this matchwood gallery begin to blaze, I'll kick out the back of the refreshment buffet, and we can walk away."

With this warm comfort the drama began. The green curtain dropped from above and was whisked away, and three gentlemen and a lady opened the ball by a dialogue conducted in tones between a "burble" and a falsetto whisper. If you wish to know their costumes, look at the nearest Japanese fan. Real Japs of course are like men and women, but stage Japs in their stiff brocades are line for line as Japs are drawn. When the four sat down, a little boy ran among them and settled their draperies, pulling out a sash bow here, displaying a skirt-fold there. The costumes were as gorgeous as the plot was incomprehensible. But we will call the play "*The Thunder Cat*, or *Harlequin Bag o' Bones and the Amazing Old Woman*, or *The Mammoth Radish*, or *The Superfluous Badger and the Swinging Lights*."

A two-sworded man in the black and gold brocade rose up and imitated the gait of an obscure actor called Henry Irving, whereat, not knowing that he was serious, I cackled aloud till the Japanese policeman looked at me austerely. Then the two-sworded man wooed the Japanese-fan lady, the other characters commenting on his proceedings like a Greek chorus till something — perhaps a misplaced accent — provoked trouble, and the two-sworded man and a vermilion splendour enjoyed a

Vincent Crummles fight to the music of all the orchestra — one guitar and something that clicked — not castanets. The small boy removed their weapons when the men had sufficiently warred, and, conceiving that the piece wanted light, fetched a ten-foot bamboo with a naked candle at the end, and held this implement about a foot from the face of the two-sworded man, following his every movement with the anxious eye of a child intrusted with a typewriter. Then the Japanese-fan girl consented to the wooing of the two-sworded man, and with a scream of eldritch laughter turned into a hideous old woman — a boy took off her hair, but she did the rest herself. At this terrible moment a gilded Thunder Cat, which is a cat issuing from a cloud, ran on wires from the flies to the centre of the gallery, and a boy with a badger's tail mocked at the two-sworded man. Then I knew that the two-sworded man had offended a cat and a badger, and would have a very bad time of it, for these two animals and the fox are to this day black sorcerers. Fearful things followed, and the scenery was changed once every five minutes. The prettiest effect was secured by a double row of candles hung on strings behind a green gauze far up the stage and set swinging with opposite motions. This, besides giving a fine idea of uncanniness, made one member of the audience sea-sick.

But the two-sworded man was far more miserable than I. The bad Thunder Cat cast such spells upon him that I gave up trying to find out what he meant to be. He was a fat-faced low comedian King of the Rats, assisted by other rats, and he ate a magic radish with side-splitttng pantomime till he became a man once more. Then all his bones were taken away, — still by the Thunder Cat, —

and he fell into a horrid heap, illuminated by the small boy with the candle — and would not recover himself till somebody spoke to a magic parrot, and a huge hairy villain and several coolies had walked over him. Then he was a girl, but, hiding behind a parasol, resumed his shape, and then the curtain came down and the audience ran about the stage and circulated generally. One small boy took it into his head that he could turn head-over-heels from the Prompt side across. With great gravity, before the unregarding house, he set to work, but rolled over sideways with a flourish of chubby legs. Nobody cared, and the polite people in the gallery could not understand why the Professor and I were helpless with laughter when the child, with a clog for a sword, imitated the strut of the two-sworded man. The actors changed in public, and any one who liked might help shift scenes. Why should not a baby enjoy himself if he liked?

A little later we left. The Thunder Cat was still working her wicked will on the two-sworded man, but all would be set right next day. There was a good deal to be done, but Justice was at the end of it. The man who sold pickled fish and tickets said so.

"Good school for a young actor," said the Professor. "He'd see what unpruned eccentricities naturally develop into. There's every trick and mannerism of the English stage in that place, magnified thirty diameters, but perfectly recognisable. How do you intend to describe it?"

"The Japanese comic opera of the future has yet to be written," I responded, grandiloquently. "Yet to be written in spite of the *Mikado*. The badger has not yet

appeared on an English stage, and the artistic mask as an accessory to the legitimate drama has never been utilised. Just imagine the *Thunder Cat* as a title for a serio-comic opera. Begin with a domestic cat possessed of magic powers, living in the house of a London tea-merchant who kicks her. Consider — "

"The lateness of the hour," was the icy answer. "To-morrow we will go and write operas in the temple close to this place."

* * * * * * *

To-morrow brought fine drizzling rain. The sun, by the way, has been hidden now for more than three weeks. They took us to what must be the chief temple of Kobé and gave it a name which I do not remember. It is an exasperating thing to stand at the altars of a faith that you know nothing about. There be rites and ceremonies of the Hindu creed that all have read of and must have witnessed, but in what manner do they pray here who look to Buddha, and what worship is paid at the Shinto shrines? The books say one thing; the eyes, another.

The temple would seem to be also a monastery and a place of great peace disturbed only by the babble of scores of little children. It stood back from the road behind a sturdy wall, an irregular mass of steep pitched roofs bound fantastically at the crown, copper-green where the thatch had ripened under the touch of time, and dull grey-black where the tiles ran. Under the eaves a man who believed in his God, and so could do good work, had carved his heart into wood till it blossomed and broke into waves or curled with the ripple of

live flames. Somewhere on the outskirts of Lahore city stands a mazy gathering of tombs and cloister walks called Chajju Bhagat's Chubara, built no one knows when and decaying no one cares how soon. Though this temple was large and spotlessly clean within and without, the silence and rest of the place were those of the courtyards in the far-off Punjab. The priests had made many gardens in corners of the wall — gardens perhaps forty feet long by twenty wide, and each, though different from its neighbour, containing a little pond with goldfish, a stone lantern or two, hummocks of rock, flat stones carved with inscriptions, and a cherry or peach tree all blossom.

Stone-paved paths ran across the courtyard and connected building with building. In an inner enclosure, where lay the prettiest garden of all, was a golden tablet ten or twelve feet high, against which stood in high relief of hammered bronze the figure of a goddess in flowing robes. The space between the paved paths here was strewn with snowy-white pebbles, and in white pebbles on red they had written on the ground, "How happy." You might take them as you pleased — for the sigh of contentment or the question of despair.

The temple itself, reached by a wooden bridge, was nearly dark, but there was light enough to show a hundred subdued splendours of brown and gold, of silk and faithfully painted screen. If you have once seen a Buddhist altar where the Master of the Law sits among golden bells, ancient bronzes, flowers in vases, and banners of tapestry, you will begin to understand why the Roman Catholic Church once prospered so mightily in this country, and will prosper in all lands where

it finds an elaborate ritual already existing. An art-loving folk will have a God who is to be propitiated with pretty things as surely as a race bred among rocks and moors and driving clouds will enshrine their deity in the storm, and make him the austere recipient of the sacrifice of the rebellious human spirit. Do you remember the story of the Bad People of Iquique? The man who told me that yarn told me another — of the Good People of Somewhere Else. They also were simple South Americans with nothing to wear, and had been conducting a service of their own in honour of their God before a black-jowled Jesuit father. At a critical moment some one forgot the ritual, or a monkey invaded the sanctity of that forest shrine and stole the priest's only garment. Anyhow, an absurdity happened, and the Good People burst into shouts of laughter and broke off to play for a while.

"But what will your God say?" asked the Jesuit, scandalised at the levity.

"Oh! he knows everything. He knows that we forget, and can't attend, and do it all wrong, but He is very wise and very strong," was the reply.

"Well, that doesn't excuse you."

"Of course it does. He just lies back and laughs," said the Good People of Somewhere Else, and fell to pelting each other with blossoms.

I forget what is the precise bearing of this anecdote. But to return to the temple. Hidden away behind a mass of variegated gorgeousness was a row of very familiar figures with gold crowns on their heads. One does not expect to meet Krishna the Butter Thief and Kali the husband beater so far east as Japan.

"What are these?"

"They are other gods," said a young priest, who giggled deprecatingly at his own creed every time he was questioned about it. "They are very old. They came from India in the past. I think they are Indian gods, but I do not know why they are here."

I hate a man who is ashamed of his faith. There was a story connected with those gods, and the priest would not tell it to me. So I sniffed at him scornfully, and went my way. It led me from the temple straight into the monastery, which was all made of delicate screens, polished floors, and brown wood ceilings. Except for my tread on the boards there was no sound in the place till I heard some one breathing heavily behind a screen. The priest slid back what had appeared to me a dead wall, and we found a very old priest half-asleep over his charcoal handwarmer. This was the picture. The priest in olive-green, his bald head, pure silver, bowed down before a sliding screen of white oiled paper which let in dull silver light. To his right a battered black lacquer stand containing the Indian ink and brushes with which he feigned to work. To the right of these, again, a pale yellow bamboo table holding a vase of olive-green crackle, and a sprig of almost black pine. There were no blossoms in this place. The priest was too old. Behind the sombre picture stood a gorgeous little Buddhist shrine, — gold and vermilion.

"He makes a fresh picture for the little screen here every day," said the young priest, pointing first to his senior, and then to a blank little tablet on the wall. The old man laughed pitifully, rubbed his head, and handed me his picture for the day. It represented a

flood over rocky ground; two men in a boat were helping two others on a tree half-submerged by the water. Even I could tell that the power had gone from him. He must have drawn well in his manhood, for one figure in the boat had action and purpose as it leaned over the gunwale; but the rest was blurred, and the lines had wandered astray as the poor old hand had quavered across the paper. I had no time to wish the artist a pleasant old age, and an easy death in the great peace that surrounded him, before the young man drew me away to the back of the shrine, and showed me a second smaller altar facing shelves on shelves of little gold and lacquer tablets covered with Japanese characters.

"These are memorial tablets of the dead," he giggled. "Once and again the priest he prays here — for those who are dead, you understand?"

"Perfectly. They call 'em masses where I come from. I want to go away and think about things. You shouldn't laugh, though, when you show off your creed."

"Ha, ha!" said the young priest, and I ran away down the dark polished passages with the faded screens on either hand, and got into the main courtyard facing the street, while the Professor was trying to catch temple fronts with his camera.

A procession passed, four abreast tramping through the sloshy mud. They did not laugh, which was strange, till I saw and heard a company of women in white walking in front of a little wooden palanquin carried on the shoulders of four bearers and suspiciously light. They sang a song, half under their breaths — a wailing, moaning song that I had only heard once before, from the lips of a native far away in the north of India, who had

been clawed past hope of cure by a bear, and was singing his own death-song as his friends bore him along.

"Have makee die," said my 'rickshaw coolie. "Few-yu-ne-ral."

I was aware of the fact. Men, women, and little children poured along the streets, and when the death-song died down, helped it forward. The half-mourners wore only pieces of white cloth about their shoulders. The immediate relatives of the dead were in white from head to foot. "Aho! Ahaa! Aho!" they wailed very softly, for fear of breaking the cadence of the falling rain, and they disappeared. All except one old woman, who could not keep pace with the procession, and so came along alone, crooning softly to herself. "Aho! Ahaa! Aho!" she whispered.

The little children in the courtyard were clustered round the Professor's camera. But one child had a very bad skin disease on his innocent head, — so bad that none of the others would play with him, — and he stood in a corner and sobbed and sobbed as though his heart would break. Poor little Gehazi!

No. XIV

EXPLAINS IN WHAT MANNER I WAS TAKEN TO VENICE IN THE RAIN, AND CLIMBED INTO A DEVIL FORT; A TIN-POT EXHIBITION, AND A BATH. OF THE MAIDEN AND THE BOLTLESS DOOR, THE CULTIVATOR AND HIS FIELDS, AND THE MANUFACTURE OF ETHNOLOGICAL THEORIES AT RAILROAD SPEED. ENDS WITH KIOTO.

"There's a deal o' fine confused feedin' about sheep's head."
— *Christopher North.*

"Come along to Osaka," said the Professor.

"Why? I'm quite comfy here, and we shall have lobster cutlets for tiffin; and, anyhow, it is raining heavily, and we shall get wet."

Sorely against my will — for it was in my mind to fudge Japan from a guide-book while I enjoyed the cookery of the Oriental at Kobé — I was dragged into a 'rickshaw and the rain, and conveyed to a railway station. Even the Japanese cannot make their railway stations lovely, though they do their best. Their system of baggage-booking is borrowed from the Americans; their narrow-gauge lines, locos, and rolling stock are English; their passenger-traffic is regulated with the precision of the Gaul, and the uniforms of their officials come from the nearest ragbag. The passengers themselves were altogether delightful. A large number of them were modified Europeans, and resembled nothing

more than Tenniel's picture of the White Rabbit on the first page of *Alice in Wonderland*. They were dressed in neat little tweed suits with fawn-coloured overcoats, and they carried ladies' reticules of black leather and nickel platings. They wore paper and celluloid stuck-up collars which must have been quite thirteen inches round the neck, and their boots were number fours. On their hands — their wee-wee hands — they had white cotton gloves, and they smoked cigarettes from fairy little cigarette cases. That was young Japan — the Japan of the present day.

"Wah, wah, God is great," said the Professor. "But it isn't in human nature for a man who sprawls about on soft mats by instinct to wear Europe clothes as though they belonged to him. If you notice, the last thing that they take to is shoes.

A lapis-lazuli coloured locomotive which, by accident, had a mixed train attached to it happened to loaf up to the platform just then, and we entered a first-class English compartment. There was no stupid double roof, window shade, or abortive thermantidote. It was a London and South-Western carriage. Osaka is about eighteen miles from Kobé, and stands at the head of the bay of Osaka. The train is allowed to go as fast as fifteen miles an hour and to play at the stations all along the line. You must know that the line runs between the hills and the shore, and the drainage-fall is a great deal steeper than anything we have between Saharunpur and Umballa. The rivers and the hill torrents come down straight from the hills on raised beds of their own formation, which beds again have to be bunded and spanned with girder bridges or — here, perhaps, I may be wrong — tunnelled.

The stations are black-tiled, red-walled, and concrete-floored, and all the plant from signal levers to goods-truck is English. The official colour of the bridges is a yellow-brown most like unto a faded chrysanthemum. The uniform of the ticket-collectors is a peaked forage cap with gold lines, black frock-coat with brass buttons, very long in the skirt, trousers with black mohair braid, and buttoned kid boots. You cannot be rude to a man in such raiment.

But the countryside was the thing that made us open our eyes. Imagine a land of rich black soil, very heavily manured, and worked by the spade and hoe almost exclusively, and if you split your field (of vision) into half-acre plots, you will get a notion of the raw material the cultivator works on. But all I can write will give you no notion of the wantonness of neatness visible in the fields, of the elaborate system of irrigation, and the mathematical precision of the planting. There was no mixing of crops, no waste of boundary in footpath, and no difference of value in the land. The water stood everywhere within ten feet of the surface, as the well-sweeps attested. On the slopes of the foot-hills each drop between the levels was neatly riveted with unmortared stones, and the edges of the watercuts were faced in like manner. The young rice was transplanted very much as draughts are laid on the board; the tea might have been cropped garden box; and between the lines of the mustard the water lay in the drills as in a wooden trough, while the purple of the beans ran up to the mustard and stopped as though cut with a rule.

On the seaboard we saw an almost continuous line

of towns variegated with factory chimneys; inland, the crazy-quilt of green, dark-green and gold. Even in the rain the view was lovely, and exactly as Japanese pictures had led me to hope for. Only one drawback occurred to the Professor and myself at the same time. Crops don't grow to the full limit of the seed on heavily worked ground dotted with villages except at a price.

"Cholera?" said I, watching a stretch of well-sweeps.

"Cholera," said the Professor. "Must be, y'know. It's all sewage irrigation."

I felt that I was friends with the cultivators at once. These broad-hatted, blue-clad gentlemen who tilled their fields by hand — except when they borrowed the village buffalo to drive the share through the rice-slough — knew what the scourge meant.

"How much do you think the Government takes in revenue from vegetable gardens of that kind?" I demanded.

"Bosh," said he, quietly, "you aren't going to describe the land-tenure of Japan. Look at the yellow of the mustard!"

It lay in sheets round the line. It ran up the hills to the dark pines. It rioted over the brown sandbars of the swollen rivers, and faded away by mile after mile to the shores of the leaden sea. The high-peaked houses of brown thatch stood knee-deep in it, and it surged up to the factory chimneys of Osaka.

"Great place, Osaka," said the guide. "All sorts of manufactures there."

Osaka is built into and over and among one thousand eight hundred and ninety-four canals, rivers, dams, and

watercuts. What the multitudinous chimneys mean I cannot tell. They have something to do with rice and cotton; but it is not good that the Japs should indulge in trade, and I will not call Osaka a "great commercial *entrepot*." "People who live in paper houses should never sell goods," as the proverb says.

Because of his many wants there is but one hotel for the Englishman in Osaka, and they call it Juter's. Here the views of two civilisations collide and the result is awful. The building is altogether Japanese; wood and tile and sliding screen from top to bottom; but the fitments are mixed. My room, for instance, held a *tokonoma*, made of the polished black stem of a palm and delicate woodwork, framing a scroll picture representing storks. But on the floor over the white mats lay a Brussels carpet that made the indignant toes tingle. From the back verandah one overhung the river which ran straight as an arrow between two lines of houses. They have cabinet-makers in Japan to fit the rivers to the towns. From my verandah I could see three bridges — one a hideous lattice-girder arrangement — and part of a fourth. We were on an island and owned a watergate if we wanted to take a boat.

Apropos of water, be pleased to listen to a Shocking Story. It is written in all the books that the Japanese though cleanly are somewhat casual in their customs. They bathe often with nothing on and together. This notion my experience of the country, gathered in the seclusion of the Oriental at Kobé, made me scoff at. I demanded a tub at Juter's. The infinitesimal man led me down verandahs and upstairs to a beautiful bath-house full of hot and cold water and fitted with cabinet-

work, somewhere in a lonely out-gallery. There was naturally no bolt to the door any more than there would be a bolt to a dining-room. Had I been sheltered by the walls of a big Europe bath, I should not have cared, but I was preparing to wash when a pretty maiden opened the door, and indicated that she also would tub in the deep, sunken Japanese bath at my side. When one is dressed only in one's virtue and a pair of spectacles it is difficult to shut the door in the face of a girl. She gathered that I was not happy, and withdrew giggling, while I thanked heaven, blushing profusely the while, that I had been brought up in a society which unfits a man to bathe *à deux*. Even an experience of the Paddington Swimming Baths would have helped me; but coming straight from India Lady Godiva was a ballet-girl in sentiment compared to this Actæon.

It rained monsoonishly, and the Professor discovered a castle which he needs must see. "It's Osaka Castle," he said, "and it has been fought over for hundreds of years. Come along."

"I've seen castles in India. Raighur, Jodhpur — all sorts of places. Let's have some more boiled salmon. It's good in this station."

"Pig," said the Professor.

We threaded our way over the four thousand and fifty-two canals, etc., where the little children played with the swiftly running water, and never a mother said "don't," till our 'rickshaw stopped outside a fort ditch thirty feet deep, and faced with gigantic granite slabs. On the far side uprose the walls of a fort. But such a fort! Fifty feet was the height of the wall, and never

a pinch of mortar in the whole. Nor was the face perpendicular, but curved like the ram of a man-of-war. They know the curve in China, and I have seen French artists introduce it into books describing a devil-besieged city of Tartary. Possibly everybody else knows it too, but that is not my affair; life as I have said being altogether new to me. The stone was granite, and the men of old time had used it like mud. The dressed blocks that made the profile of the angles were from twenty feet long, ten or twelve feet high, and as many in thickness. There was no attempt at binding, but there was no fault in the jointing.

"And the little Japs built this!" I cried, awe-stricken at the quarries that rose round me.

"Cyclopean masonry," grunted the Professor, punching with a stick a monolith of seventeen feet cube. "Not only did they build it, but they took it. Look at this. Fire!"

The stones had been split and bronzed in places, and the cleavage was the cleavage of fire. Evil must it have been for the armies that led the assault on these monstrous walls. Castles in India I know, and the forts of great Emperors I had seen, but neither Akbar in the north, nor Scindia in the south, had built after this fashion — without ornament, without colour, but with a single eye to savage strength and the utmost purity of line. Perhaps the fort would have looked less forbidding in sunlight. The grey, rain-laden atmosphere through which I saw it suited its spirit. The barracks of the garrison, the commandant's very dainty house, a peach-garden, and two deer were foreign to the place. They should have peopled it with giants from the moun-

tains, instead of — Gurkhas! A Jap infantryman is not a Gurkha, though he might be mistaken for one as long as he stood still. The sentry at the quarter-guard belonged, I fancy, to the 4th Regiment. His uniform was black or blue, with red facings, and shoulder-straps carrying the number of the regiment in cloth. The rain necessitated an overcoat, but why he should have carried knapsack, blanket, boots, *and* binoculars I could not fathom. The knapsack was of cowskin with the hair on, the boots were strapped soles, cut on each side, while a heavy country blanket was rolled U-shape over the head of the knapsack, fitting close to the back. In the place usually occupied by the mess-tin was a black leather case shaped like a field-glass. This must be a mistake of mine, but I can only record as I see. The rifle was a side-bolt weapon of some kind, and the bayonet an uncommonly good sword one, locked to the muzzle, English fashion. The ammunition pouches, as far as I could see under the greatcoat, ran on the belt in front, and were double-strapped down. White spatterdashes — very dirty — and peaked cap completed the outfit. I surveyed the man with interest, and would have made further examination of him but for fear of the big bayonet. His arms were well kept, — not speckless by any means, — but his uniform would have made an English colonel swear. There was no portion of his body except the neck that it pretended to fit. I peeped into the quarter-guard. Fans and dainty tea-sets do not go with one's notions of a barrack. One drunken defaulter of certain far-away regiments that I could name would not only have cleared out that quarter-guard, but brought away all its fittings except the rifle-racks. Yet

the little men, who were always gentle, and never got drunk, were mounting guard over a pile that, with a blue fire on the bastions, might have served for the guard-gates of Hell.

I climbed to the top of the fort and was rewarded by a view of thirty miles of country, chiefly pale yellow mustard and blue-green pine, and the sight of the very large city of Osaka fading away into mist. The guide took most pleasure in the factory chimneys. "There is an exposition here — an exposition of industrialities. Come and see," said he. He took us down from that high place and showed us the glory of the land in the shape of corkscrews, tin mugs, egg-whisks, dippers, silks, buttons, and all the trumpery that can be stitched on a card and sold for five-pence three farthings. The Japanese unfortunately make all these things for themselves, and are proud of it. They have nothing to learn from the West as far as finish is concerned, and by intuition know how to case and mount wares tastefully. The exposition was in four large sheds running round a central building which held only screens, pottery, and cabinet-ware loaned for the occasion. I rejoiced to see that the common people did not care for the penknives, and the pencils, and the mock jewellery. They left those sheds alone and discussed the screens, first taking off their clogs that the inlaid floor of the room might not suffer. Of all the gracious things I beheld, two only remain in my memory, — one a screen in grey representing the heads of six devils instinct with malice and hate; the other, a bold sketch in monochrome of an old woodcutter wrestling with the down-bent branch of a tree. Two hundred years have passed since the artist dropped his

pencil, but you may almost hear the tough wood jar under the stroke of the chopper, as the old man puts his back into the task and draws in the labouring breath. There is a picture by Legros of a beggar dying in a ditch, which might have been suggested by that screen.

Next morning, after a night's rain, which sent the river racing under the frail balconies at eight miles an hour, the sun broke through the clouds. Is this a little matter to you who can count upon him daily? I had not seen him since March, and was beginning to feel anxious. Then the land of peach blossom spread its draggled wings abroad and rejoiced. All the pretty maidens put on their loveliest crêpe sashes, — fawn colour, pink, blue, orange, and lilac, — all the little children picked up a baby each, and went out to be happy. In a temple garden full of blossom I performed the miracle of Deucalion with two cents' worth of sweets. The babies swarmed on the instant, till, for fear of raising all the mothers too, I forbore to give them any more. They smiled and nodded prettily, and trotted after me, forty strong, the big ones helping the little, and the little ones skipping in the puddles. A Jap child never cries, never scuffles, never fights, and never makes mud pies except when it lives on the banks of a canal. Yet, lest it should spread its sash-bow and become a bald-headed angel ere its time, Providence has decreed that it should never, never blow its little nose. Notwithstanding the defect, I love it.

There was no business in Osaka that day because of the sunshine and the budding of the trees. Everybody went to a tea-house with his friends. I went also, but first ran along a boulevard by the side of the river, pre-

tending to look at the Mint. This was only a common place of solid granite where they turn out dollars and rubbish of that kind. All along the boulevard the cherry, peach, and plum trees, pink, white, and red, touched branches and made a belt of velvety soft colour as far as the eye could reach. Weeping willows were the normal ornaments of the waterside, this revel of bloom being only part of the prodigality of Spring. The Mint may make a hundred thousand dollars a day, but all the silver in its keeping will not bring again the three weeks of the peach blossom which, even beyond the chrysanthemum, is the crown and glory of Japan. For some act of surpassing merit performed in a past life I have been enabled to hit those three weeks in the middle.

"Now is the Japanese festival of the cherry blossom," said the guide. "All the people will be festive. They will pray too and go to the tea-gardens."

Now you might wall an Englishman about with cherry trees in bloom from head to heel, and after the first day he would begin to complain of the smell. As you know, the Japanese arrange a good many of their festivals in honour of flowers, and this is surely commendable, for blossoms are the most tolerant of gods.

The tea-house system of the Japanese filled me with pleasure at a pleasure that I could not fully comprehend. It pays a company in Osaka to build on the outskirts of the town a nine-storied pagoda of wood and iron, to lay out elaborate gardens round it, and to hang the whole with strings of blood-red lanterns, because the Japanese will come wherever there is a good view to sit on a mat and discuss tea and sweetmeats and *saki*. This Eiffel Tower is, to tell the truth, anything but pretty, yet the

surroundings redeem it. Although it was not quite completed, the lower storeys were full of tea-stalls and tea-drinkers. The men and women were obviously admiring the view. It is an astounding thing to see an Oriental so engaged; it is as though he had stolen something from a sahib.

From Osaka — canal-cut, muddy, and fascinating Osaka — the Professor, Mister Yamagutchi, — the guide, — and I took train to Kioto, an hour from Osaka. On the road I saw four buffaloes at as many rice-ploughs — which was noticeable as well as wasteful. A buffalo at rest must cover the half of a Japanese field; but perhaps they are kept on the mountain ledges and only pulled down when wanted. The Professor says that what I call buffalo is really bullock. The worst of travelling with an accurate man is his accuracy. We argued about the Japanese in the train, about his present and his future, and the manner in which he has ranged himself on the side of the grosser nations of the earth.

"Did it hurt his feelings very much to wear our clothes? Didn't he rebel when he put on a pair of trousers for the first time? Won't he grow sensible some day and drop foreign habits?" These were some of the questions I put to the landscape and the Professor.

"He was a baby," said the latter, "a big baby. I think his sense of humour was at the bottom of the change, but he didn't know that a nation which once wears trousers never takes 'em off. You see 'enlightened' Japan is only one-and-twenty years old, and people are not very wise at one-and-twenty. Read Reed's *Japan* and learn how the change came about. There

was a Mikado and a *Shogun* who was Sir Frederick Roberts, but he tried to be the Viceroy and — "

"Bother the *Shogun!* I've seen something like the Babu class, and something like the farmer class. What I want to see is the Rajput class — the man who used to wear the thousands and thousands of swords in the curio-shops. Those swords were as much made for use as a Rajputana sabre. Where are the men who used 'em? Show me a Samurai."

The Professor answered not a word, but scrutinised heads on the wayside platforms. "I take it that the high-arched forehead, club nose, and eyes close together — the Spanish type — are from Rajput stock, while the German-faced Jap is the Khattri — the lower class."

Thus we talked of the natures and dispositions of men we knew nothing about till we had decided (1) that the painful politeness of the Japanese nation rose from the habit, dropped only twenty years ago, of extended and emphatic sword-wearing, even as the Rajput is the pink of courtesy because his friend goes armed; (2) that this politeness will disappear in another generation, or will at least be seriously impaired; (3) that the cultured Japanese of the English pattern will corrupt and defile the tastes of his neighbours till (4) Japan altogether ceases to exist as a separate nation and becomes a button-hook manufacturing appanage of America; (5) that these things being so, and sure to happen in two or three hundred years, the Professor and I were lucky to reach Japan betimes; and (6) that it was foolish to form theories about the country until we had seen a little of it.

So we came to the city of Kioto in regal sunshine, tempered by a breeze that drove the cherry

blossoms in drifts about the streets. One Japanese town, in the southern provinces at least, is very like another to look at — a grey-black sea of house roofs, speckled with the white walls of the fire-proof godowns where merchants and rich men keep their chief treasures. The general level is broken by the temple roofs, which are turned up at the edges, and remotely resemble so many terai-hats. Kioto fills a plain almost entirely surrounded by wooded hills, very familiar in their aspect to those who have seen the Siwaliks. Once upon a time it was the capital of Japan, and to-day numbers two hundred and fifty thousand people. It is laid out like an American town. All the streets run at right angles to each other. That, by the way, is exactly what the Professor and I are doing. We are elaborating the theory of the Japanese people, and we can't agree.

No. XV

KIOTO AND HOW I FELL IN LOVE WITH THE CHIEF BELLE THERE AFTER I HAD CONFERRED WITH CERTAIN CHINA MERCHANTS WHO TRAFFICKED IN TEA. SHOWS FURTHER HOW, IN A GREAT TEMPLE, I BROKE THE TENTH COMMANDMENT IN FIFTY-THREE PLACES AND BOWED DOWN BEFORE KANO AND A CARPENTER. TAKES ME TO ARASHIMA.

"Could I but write the things I see,
My world would haste to gaze with me.
But since the traitor Pen hath failed
To paint earth's loveliness unveiled,
I can but pray my folk who read: —
'For lavish Will take starveling Deed.'"

We are consorting with sixty of the *Sahib-log* in the quaintest hotel that ever you saw. It stands on the hillside overlooking the whole town of Kioto, and its garden is veritable Japanese. Fantastically trimmed tea trees, junipers, dwarfed pine, and cherry, are mixed up with ponds of goldfish, stone lanterns, quaint rock-work, and velvety turf all at an angle of thirty-five degrees. Behind us the pines, red and black, cover the hill and run down in a long spur to the town. But an auctioneer's catalogue cannot describe the charms of the place or deal justly with the tea-garden full of cherry trees that lies a hundred yards below the

hotel. We were solemnly assured that hardly any one came to Kioto. That is why we meet every soul in the ship that had brought us to Nagasaki; and that is why our ears are constantly assailed with the clamour of people who are discussing places which must be "done." An Englishman is a very horrible person when he is on the war-path; so is an American, a Frenchman, or a German.

I had been watching the afternoon sunlight upon the trees and the town, the shift and play of colour in the crowded street of the cherry, and crooning to myself because the sky was blue and I was alive beneath it with a pair of eyes in my head.

Immediately the sun went down behind the hills the air became bitterly cold, but the people in crêpe sashes and silk coats never ceased their sober frolicking. There was to be a great service in honour of the cherry blossom the next day at the chief temple of Kioto, and they were getting ready for it. As the light died in a wash of crimson, the last thing I saw was a frieze of three little Japanese babies with fuzzy top-knots and huge sashes trying to hang head downwards from a bamboo rail. They did it, and the closing eye of day regarded them solemnly as it shut. The effect in *silhouette* was immense!

A company of China tea-merchants were gathered in the smoking-room after dinner, and by consequence talked their own "shop," which was interesting. Their language is not Our language, for they know nothing of the tea-gardens, of drying and withering and rolling, of the assistant who breaks his collar-bone in the middle of the busiest season, or of the sickness that smites the coolie

lines at about the same time. They are happy men who get their tea by the break of a thousand chests from the interior of the country and play with it upon the London markets. None the less they have a very wholesome respect for Indian tea, which they cordially detest. Here is the sort of argument that a Foochow man, himself a very heavy buyer, flung at me across the table.

"You may talk about your Indian teas, — Assam and Kangra, or whatever you call them, — but I tell *you* that if ever they get a strong hold in England, the doctors will be down on them, Sir. They'll be medically forbidden. See if they aren't. They shatter your nerves to pieces. Unfit for human consumption — that's what they are. Though I don't deny they *are* selling at Home. They don't keep, though. After three months, the sorts that I've seen in London turn to hay."

"I think you are wrong there," said a Hankow man. "My experience is that the Indian teas keep better than ours by a long way. But" — turning to me — "if we could only get the China Government to take off the duties, we could smash Indian tea and every one connected with it. We could lay down tea in Mincing Lane at threepence a pound. No, we do not adulterate our teas. That's one of *your* tricks in India. We get it as pure as yours — every chest in the break equal to sample."

"You can trust your native buyers then?" I interrupted.

"Trust 'em? Of course we can," cut in the Foochow merchant. "There are no tea-gardens in China as you understand them. The peasantry cultivate the tea, and the buyers buy from them for cash each season. You can

give a Chinaman a hundred thousand dollars and tell him to turn it into tea of your own particular chop — up to sample. Of course the man may be a thorough-paced rogue in many ways, but he knows better than to play the fool with an English house. Back comes your tea — a thousand half-chests, we'll say. You open perhaps five, and the balance go home untried. But they are all equal to sample. That's business, that is. The Chinaman's a born merchant and full of backbone. I like him for business purposes. The Jap's no use. He isn't man enough to handle a hundred thousand dollars. Very possibly he'd run off with it — or try to."

"The Jap has no business savvy. God knows I hate the Chinamen," said a bass voice behind the tobacco smoke, "but you can do business with him. The Jap's a little huckster who can't see beyond his nose."

They called for drinks and told tales, these merchants of China, — tales of money and bales and boxes, — but through all their stories there was an implied leaning upon native help which, even allowing for the peculiarities of China, was rather startling. "The compradore did this: Ho Whang did that: a syndicate of Pekin bankers did the other thing" — and so on. I wondered whether a certain lordly indifference as to details had anything to do with eccentricities in the China tea-breaks and fluctuations of quality, which do occur in spite of all the men said to the contrary. Again, the merchants spoke of China as a place where fortunes are made — a land only waiting to be opened up to pay a hundredfold. They told me of the Home Government helping private trade, in kind and unobtrusive ways, to get a firmer hold on the Public Works Department contracts

that are now flying abroad. This was pleasant hearing. But the strangest thing of all was the tone of hope and almost contentment that pervaded their speech. They were well-to-do men making money, and they liked their lives. You know how, when two or three of Us are gathered together in our own barren pauper land, we groan in chorus and are disconsolate. The civilian, the military man, and the merchant, they are all alike. The one overworked and broken by exchange, the second a highly organised beggar, and the third a nobody in particular, always at loggerheads with what he considers an academical Government. I knew in a way that We were a grim and miserable community in India, but I did not know the measure of Our fall till I heard men talking about fortunes, success, money, and the pleasure, good living, and frequent trips to England that money brings. Their friends did not seem to die with unnatural swiftness, and their wealth enabled them to endure the calamity of Exchange with calm. Yes, we of India are a wretched folk.

Very early in the dawn, before the nesting sparrows were awake, there was a sound in the air which frightened me out of my virtuous sleep. It was a lisping mutter — very deep and entirely strange. "That's an earthquake, and the hillside is beginning to slide," quoth I, taking measures of defence. The sound repeated itself again and again, till I argued, that if it were the precursor of an earthquake, the affair had stuck halfway. At breakfast men said: "That was the great bell of Kioto just next door to the hotel a little way up the hillside. As a bell, y'know, it's rather a failure, from an English point of view. They don't

ring it properly, and the volume of sound is comparatively insignificant."

"So I fancied when I first heard it," I said casually, and went out up the hill under sunshine that filled the heart and trees, that filled the eye with joy. You know the unadulterated pleasure of that first clear morning in the Hills when a month's solid idleness lies before the loafer, and the scent of the deodars mixes with the scent of the meditative cigar. That was my portion when I stepped through the violet-studded long grass into forgotten little Japanese cemeteries — all broken pillars and lichened tablets — till I found, under a cut in the hillside, the big bell of Kioto — twenty feet of green bronze hung inside a fantastically roofed shed of wooden beams. A beam, by the way, *is* a beam in Japan; anything under a foot thick is a stick. These beams were the best parts of big trees, clamped with bronze and iron. A knuckle rapped lightly on the lip of the bell — it was not more than five feet from the ground — made the great monster breathe heavily, and the blow of a stick started a hundred shrill-voiced echoes round the darkness of its dome. At one side, guyed by half a dozen small hawsers, hung a battering-ram, a twelve-foot spar bound with iron, its nose pointing full-butt at a chrysanthemum in high relief on the belly of the bell. Then, by special favour of Providence, which always looks after the idle, they began to sound sixty strokes. Half a dozen men swung the ram back and forth with shoutings and outcries, till it had gathered sufficient way, and the loosened ropes let it hurl itself against the chrysanthemum. The boom of the smitten bronze was swallowed up by the earth below and the hillside behind, so that its volume was

not proportionate to the size of the bell, exactly as the men had said. An English ringer would have made thrice as much of it. But then he would have lost the crawling jar that ran through rock-stone and pine for twenty yards round, that beat through the body of the listener and died away under his feet like the shock of a distant blasting. I endured twenty strokes and removed myself, not in the least ashamed of mistaking the sound for an earthquake. Many times since I have heard the bell speak when I was far off. It says *B-r-r-r* very deep down in its throat, but when you have once caught the noise you will never forget it. And so much for the big bell of Kioto.

From its house a staircase of cut stone takes you down to the temple of Chion-in, where I arrived on Easter Sunday just before service, and in time to see the procession of the Cherry Blossom. They had a special service at a place called St. Peter's at Rome about the same time, but the priests of Buddha excelled the priests of the Pope. Thus it happened. The main front of the temple was three hundred feet long, a hundred feet deep, and sixty feet high. One roof covered it all, and saving for the tiles there was no stone in the structure; nothing but wood three hundred years old, as hard as iron. The pillars that upheld the roof were three feet, four feet, and five feet in diameter, and guiltless of any paint. They showed the natural grain of the wood till they were lost in the rich brown darkness far overhead. The cross-beams were of grained wood of great richness; cedar-wood and camphor-wood and the hearts of gigantic pine had been put under requisition for the great work. One carpenter — they

call him only a carpenter — had designed the whole, and his name is remembered to this day. A half of the temple was railed off for the congregation by a two-foot railing, over which silks of ancient device had been thrown. Within the railing were all the religious fittings, but these I cannot describe. All I remember was row upon row of little lacquered stands each holding a rolled volume of sacred writings; an altar as tall as a cathedral organ where gold strove with colour, colour with lacquer, and lacquer with inlay, and candles such as Holy Mother Church uses only on her greatest days, shed a yellow light that softened all. Bronze incense-burners in the likeness of dragons and devils fumed under the shadow of silken banners, behind which, wood tracery, as delicate as frost on a window-pane, climbed to the ridge-pole. Only there was no visible roof to this temple. The light faded away under the monstrous beams, and we might have been in a cave a hundred fathoms below the earth but for the sunshine and blue sky at the portals, where the little children squabbled and shouted.

On my word, I tried to note down soberly what lay before me, but the eye tired, and the pencil ran off into fragmentary ejaculations. But what would you have done if you had seen what I saw when I went round the temple verandah to what we must call a vestry at the back? It was a big building connected with the main one by a wooden bridge of deepest time-worn brown. Down the bridge ran a line of saffron-coloured matting, and down the matting, very slowly and solemnly, as befitted their high office, filed three and fifty priests, each one clad in at least four garments of brocade, crêpe, and silk. There were silks that do not see the light of

the markets, and brocades that only temple wardrobes know.

There was sea-green watered silk with golden dragons; terra-cotta crêpe with ivory-white chrysanthemums clustering upon it; black-barred silk shot with yellow flames; lapis-lazuli silk and silver fishes; avanturine silk with plaques of grey-green let in; cloth of gold over dragon's blood; and saffron and brown silk stiff as a board with embroidery. We returned to the temple now filled with the gorgeous robes. The little lacquer stands were the priests' book-racks. Some lay down among them, while others moved very softly about the golden altars and the incense-burners; and the high priest disposed himself, with his back to the congregation, in a golden chair through which his robe winked like the shards of a tiger-beetle.

In solemn calm the books were unrolled, and the priests began chanting Pali texts in honour of the Apostle of Unworldliness, who had written that they were not to wear gold or mixed colours, or touch the precious metals. But for a few unimportant accessories in the way of half-seen images of great men — but these could have been called saints — the scene before me might have been unrolled in a Roman Catholic cathedral, say the rich one at Arundel. The same thought was in other minds, for in a pause of the slow chant a voice behind me whispered: —

> "To hear the blessed mutter of the mass
> And see God made and eaten all day long."

It was a man from Hong-Kong, very angry that he too had not been permitted to photograph an interior. He

called all this splendour of ritual and paraphernalia just "an interior," and revenged himself by spitting Browning at it.

The chant quickened as the service drew to an end, and the candles burned low.

We went away to other parts of the temple pursued by the chorus of the devout till we were out of earshot in a paradise of screens. Two or three hundred years ago there lived a painterman of the name of Kano. Him the temple of Chion-in brought to beautify the walls of the rooms. Since a wall is a screen, and a screen is a wall, Kano, R. A., had rather a large job. But he was helped by pupils and imitators, and in the end left a few hundred screens which are all finished pictures. As you already know, the interior of a temple is very simple in its arrangements. The priests live on white mats, in little rooms, with brown ceilings, that can at pleasure be thrown into one large room. This also was the arrangement at Chion-in, though the rooms were comparatively large and gave on to sumptuous verandahs and passages. Since the Emperor occasionally visited the place there was a room set apart for him of more than ordinary splendour. Twisted silk tassels of intricate design served in lieu of catches to pull back the sliding screens, and the woodwork was lacquered. These be only feeble words, but it is not in my grip to express the restfulness of it all, or the power that knew how to secure the desired effect with a turn of the wrist. The great Kano drew numbed pheasants huddled together on the snow-covered bough of a pine; or a peacock in his pride spreading his tail to delight his womenfolk; or a riot of chrysanthemums poured out of a vase; or the figures of

toilworn countryfolk coming home from market; or a hunting scene at the foot of Fujiyama. The equally great carpenter who built the temple framed each picture with absolute precision under a ceiling that was a miracle of device, and Time, the greatest artist of the three, touched the gold so that it became amber, and the woodwork so that it grew dark honey-colour, and the shining surface of the lacquer so that it became deep and rich and semi-transparent. As in one room, so in all the others. Sometimes we slid back the screens and discovered a tiny bald-pated acolyte praying over an incense-burner, and sometimes a lean priest eating his rice; but generally the rooms were empty, swept and garnished.

Minor artists had worked with Kano the magnificent. These had been allowed to lay brush upon panels of wood in the outer verandahs, and very faithfully had they toiled. It was not till the guide called my attention to them that I discovered scores of sketches in monochrome low down on the verandah doors. An iris broken by the fall of a branch torn off by a surly ape; a bamboo spray bowed before the wind that was ruffling a lake; a warrior of the past ambushing his enemy in a thicket, hand on sword, and mouth gathered into puckers of intensest concentration, were among the many notes that met my eye. How long, think you, would a sepia-drawing stand without defacement in the midst of our civilisation were it put on the bottom panel of a door, or the scantling of a kitchen passage? Yet in this gentle country a man may stoop down and write his name in the very dust, certain that, if the writing be craftily done, his children's children will reverently let it stand.

"Of course there are no such temples made nowadays," I said, when we regained the sunshine, and the Professor was trying to find out how panel pictures and paper screens went so well with the dark dignity of massive woodwork.

"They are building a temple on the other side of the city," said Mister Yamagutchi. "Come along, and see the hair-ropes which hang there."

We came flying in our 'rickshaws across Kioto, till we saw netted in a hundred cobwebs of scaffolding a temple even larger than the great Chion-in.

"That was burned down long ago, — the old temple that was here, you know. Then the people made a penny subscription from all parts of Japan, and those who could not send money sent their hair to be made into rope. They have been ten years building this new temple. It is all wood," said the guide.

The place was alive with men who were putting the finishing touches to the great tiled roof and laying down the floors. Wooden pillars as gigantic, carving as wantonly elaborate, eaves as intricate in their mouldings, and joinery as perfect as anything in the Chion-in temple met me at every turn. But the fresh-cut wood was creamy white and lemon where, in the older building, it had been iron-hard and brown. Only the raw ends of the joists were stopped with white lacquer to prevent the incursions of insects, and the deeper tracery was protected against birds by fine wire netting. Everything else was wood — wood down to the massive clamped and bolted beams of the foundation which I investigated through gaps in the flooring.

Japan is a great people. Her masons play with stone,

her carpenters with wood, her smiths with iron, and her artists with life, death, and all the eye can take in. Mercifully she has been denied the last touch of firmness in her character which would enable her to play with the whole round world. We possess that — We, the nation of the glass flower-shade, the pink worsted mat, the red and green china puppy-dog, and the poisonous Brussels carpet. It is our compensation. . . .

"Temples!" said a man from Calcutta, some hours later as I raved about what I had seen. "Temples! I'm sick of temples. If I've seen one, I've seen fifty thousand of 'em — all exactly alike. But I tell you what is exciting. Go down the rapids at Arashima, — eight miles from here. It's better fun than any temple with a fat-faced Buddha in the middle."

But I took my friend's advice. Have I managed to convey the impression that April is fine in Japan? Then I apologise. It is generally rainy, and the rain is cold; but the sunshine when it comes is worth it all. We shouted with joy of living when our fiery, untamed 'rickshaws bounded from stone to stone of the vilely paved streets of the suburbs and brought us into what ought to have been vegetable gardens but were called fields. The face of the flat lands was cut up in every direction by bunds, and all the roads seem to run on the top of them.

"Never," said the Professor, driving his stick into the black soil, "never have I imagined irrigation so perfectly controlled as this is. Look at the *rajbahars* faced with stone and fitted with sluices; look at the water-wheels and, — phew! but they manure their fields too well."

The first circle of fields round any town is always

pretty rank, but this superfluity of scent continued throughout the country. Saving a few parts near Dacca and Patna, the face of the land was more thickly populated than Bengal and was worked five times better. There was no single patch untilled, and no cultivation that was not up to the full limit of the soil's productiveness. Onions, barley, in little ridges between the ridges of tea, beans, rice, and a half a dozen other things that we did not know the names of, crowded the eye already wearied with the glare of the golden mustard. Manure is a good thing, but manual labour is better. We saw both even to excess. When a Japanese ryot has done everything to his field that he can possibly think of, he weeds the barley stalk by stalk with his finger and thumb. This is true. I saw a man doing it.

We headed through the marvellous country straight across the plain on which Kioto stands, till we reached the range of hills on the far side, and found ourselves mixed up with half a mile of lumber-yard.

Cultivation and water-cuts were gone, and our tireless 'rickshaws were running by the side of a broad, shallow river, choked with logs of every size. I am prepared to believe anything of the Japanese, but I do not see why Nature, which they say is the same pitiless Power all the world over, should send them their logs unsplintered by rocks, neatly barked, and with a slot neatly cut at the end of each pole for the reception of a rope. I have seen timber fly down the Ravi in spate, and it was hooked out as ragged as a tooth-brush. This material comes down clean. Consequently the slot is another miracle.

"When the day is fine," said the guide, softly, "all the people of Kioto come to Arashima to have picnics."

"But they are always having picnics in the cherry-tree gardens. They picnic in the tea-houses. They — they — "

"Yes, when it is a fine day, they always go somewhere and picnic."

"But why? Man isn't made to picnic."

"But why? Because it is a fine day. Englishmen say that the money of the Japanese comes from heaven, because they always do nothing — so you think. But look now, here is a pretty place."

The river charged down a turn in the pine-grown hills, and broke in silver upon the timber and the remains of a light bridge washed away some days before. On our side, and arranged so as to face the fairest view of the young maples, stood a row of tea-houses and booths built over the stream. The sunlight that could not soften the gloom of the pines dwelt tenderly among the green of the maples and touched the reaches below where the cherry blossom broke in pink foam against the black-roofed houses of a village across the water.

There I stopped.

No. XVI

THE PARTY IN THE PARLOUR WHO PLAYED GAMES. A COMPLETE HISTORY OF ALL MODERN JAPANESE ART; A SURVEY OF THE PAST, AND A PROPHECY OF THE FUTURE, ARRANGED AND COMPOSED IN THE KIOTO FACTORIES.

> "Oh, brave new world that has such creatures in it,
> How beautiful mankind is!"

How I got to the tea-house I cannot tell. Perhaps a pretty girl waved a bough of cherry blossom at me, and I followed the invitation. I know that I sprawled upon the mats and watched the clouds scudding across the hills and the logs flying down the rapids, and smelt the smell of the raw peeled timber, and listened to the grunts of the boatmen as they wrestled with that and the rush of the river, and was altogether happier than it is lawful for a man to be.

The lady of the tea-house insisted upon screening us off from the other pleasure-parties who were tiffining in the same verandah. She brought beautiful blue screens with storks on them and slid them into grooves. I stood it as long as I could. There were peals of laughter in the next compartment, the pattering of soft feet, the clinking of little dishes, and at the chinks of the screens the twinkle of diamond eyes. A whole family had come in from Kioto for the day's pleasuring. Mamma looked

after grandmamma, and the young aunt looked after a guitar, and the two girls of fourteen and fifteen looked after a merry little tomboy of eight, who, when she thought of it, looked after the baby who had the air of looking after the whole party. Grandmamma was dressed in dark blue, mamma in blue and grey, the girls had gorgeous dresses of lilac, fawn, and primrose crêpe with silk sashes, the colour of apple blossom and the inside of a newly cut melon; the tomboy was in old gold and russet brown; but the baby tumbled his fat little body across the floor among the dishes in the colours of the Japanese rainbow, which owns no crude tints. They were all pretty, all except grandmamma, who was merely good-humoured and very bald, and when they had finished their dainty dinner, and the brown lanquer stands, the blue and white crockery, and the jade-green drinking-cups had been taken away, the aunt played a little piece on the *samisen*, and the girls played blindman's-buff all round the tiny room.

Flesh and blood could not have stayed on the other side of the screens. I wanted to play too, but I was too big and too rough, and so could only sit in the verandah, watching these dainty bits of Dresden at their game. They shrieked and giggled and chattered and sat down on the floor with the innocent abandon of maidenhood, and broke off to kiss the baby when he showed signs of being overlooked. They played puss-in-the-corner, their feet tied with blue and white handkerchiefs because the room did not allow unfettered freedom of limb, and when they could play no more for laughing, they fanned themselves as they lay propped up against the blue screens, — each girl a picture no painter could

reproduce, — and I shrieked with the best of them till I rolled off the verandah and nearly dropped into the laughing street. Was I a fool? Then I fooled in good company, for an austere man from India — a person who puts his faith in race-horses and believes nothing except the Civil Code — was also at Arashima that day. I met him flushed and excited.

"'Had a lively time," he panted, with a hundred children at his heels. "There's a sort of roulette table here where you can gamble for cakes. I bought the owner's stock-in-trade for three dollars and ran the Monte Carlo for the benefit of the kids — about five thousand of 'em. Never had such fun in my life. It beats the Simla lotteries hollow. They were perfectly orderly till they had cleared the tables of everything except a big sugar-tortoise. Then they rushed the bank, and I ran away."

And he was a hard man who had not played with anything as innocent as sweetmeats for many years!

When we were all weak with laughing, and the Professor's camera was mixed up in a tangle of laughing maidens to the confusion of his pictures, we too ran away from the tea-house and wandered down the river bank till we found a boat of sewn planks which poled us across the swollen river, and landed us on a little rocky path overhanging the water where the iris and the violet ran riot together and jubilant waterfalls raced through the undergrowth of pine and maple. We were at the foot of the Arashima rapids, and all the pretty girls of Kioto were with us looking at the view. Up-stream a lonely black pine stood out from all its fellows to peer up the bend where the racing water ran

deep in oily swirls. Down-stream the river threshed across the rocks and troubled the fields of fresh logs on its bosom, while men in blue drove silver-white boats gunwale-deep into the foam of its onset and hooked the logs away. Underfoot the rich earth of the hillside sent up the breath of the turn of the year to the maples that had already caught the message from the fire-winds of April. Oh! it was good to be alive, to trample the stalks of the iris, to drag down the cherry-bloom spray in a wash of dew across the face, and to gather the violets for the mere pleasure of heaving them into the torrent and reaching out for fairer flowers.

"What a nuisance it is to be a slave to the camera," said the Professor, upon whom the dumb influences of the season were working though he knew it not.

"What a nuisance it is to be a slave to the pen," I answered, for the spring had come to the land. I had hated the spring for seven years because to me it meant discomfort.

"Let us go straight home and see the flowers come out in the Parks."

"Let us enjoy what lies to our hand, you Philistine." And we did till a cloud darkened and a wind ruffled the river reaches, and we returned to our 'rickshaws sighing with contentment.

"How many people do you suppose the land supports to the square mile?" said the Professor, at a turn in the homeward road. He had been reading statistics.

"Nine hundred," I said at a venture. "It's thicker set with humans than Sarun or Behar. Say one thousand."

"Two thousand two hundred and fifty odd. Can you believe it?"

"Looking at the landscape I can, but I don't suppose India will believe it. S'pose I write fifteen hundred?"

"They'll say you exaggerate just the same. Better stick to the true total. Two thousand two hundred and fifty-six to the square mile, and not a sign of poverty in the houses. How do they do it?"

I should like to know the answer to that question. Japan of my limited view is inhabited almost entirely by little children whose duty is to prevent their elders from becoming too frivolous. The babies do a little work occasionally, but their parents interfere by petting them. At Yami's hotel the attendance is in the hands of ten-year-olds because everybody else has gone out picnicing among the cherry trees. The little imps find time to do a man's work and to scuffle on the staircase between whiles. My special servitor, called "The Bishop" on account of the gravity of his appearance, his blue apron, and gaiters, is the liveliest of the lot, but even his energy cannot account for the Professor's statistics of population. . . .

I have seen one sort of work among the Japanese, but it was not the kind that makes crops. It was purely artistic. A ward of the city of Kioto is devoted to manufactures. A manufacturer in this part of the world does not hang out a sign. He may be known in Paris and New York: that is the concern of the two cities. The Englishman who wishes to find his establishment in Kioto has to hunt for him up and down slums with the aid of a guide. I have seen three manufactories. The first was of porcelain-ware, the second of *cloissonnée*, and the third of lacquer, inlay, and bronzes. The first was behind black wooden palings, and for external appearance might just

as well have been a tripe-shop. Inside sat the manager opposite a tiny garden four feet square in which a papery-looking palm grew out of a coarse stoneware pot and overshadowed a dwarfed pine. The rest of the room was filled with pottery waiting to be packed — modern Satsuma for the most part, the sort of thing you get at an auction.

"This made send Europe — India — America," said the manager, calmly. "You come to see?"

He took us along a verandah of polished wood to the kilns, to the clay vats, and the yards where the tiny "saggers" were awaiting their complement of pottery. There are differences many and technical between Japanese and Burslem pottery in the making, but these are of no consequence. In the moulding house, where they were making the bodies of Satsuma vases, the wheels, all worked by hand, ran true as a hair. The potter sat on a clean mat with his tea-things at his side. When he had turned out a vase-body he saw that it was good, nodded appreciatively to himself, and poured out some tea ere starting the next one. The potters lived close to the kilns and had nothing pretty to look at. It was different in the painting rooms. Here in a cabinet-like house sat the men, women, and boys who painted the designs on the vases after the first firing. That all their arrangements were scrupulously neat is only saying that they were Japanese; that their surroundings were fair and proper is only saying that they were artists. A sprig of a cherry blossom stood out defiantly against the black of the garden paling; a gnarled pine cut the blue of the sky with its spiky splinters as it lifted itself above the paling, and in a little pond the iris and the horsetail

nodded to the wind. The workers when at fault had only to lift their eyes, and Nature herself would graciously supply the missing link of a design. Somewhere in dirty England men dream of craftsmen working under conditions which shall help and not stifle the half-formed thought. They even form guilds and write semi-rhythmical prayers to Time and Chance and all the other gods that they worship, to bring about the desired end. Would they have their dream realised, let them see how they make pottery in Japan, each man sitting on a snowy mat with loveliness of line and colour within arm's length of him, while with downcast eyes he — splashes in the conventional diaper of a Satsuma vase as fast as he can! The Barbarians want Satsuma and they shall have it, if it has to be made in Kioto one piece per twenty minutes. So much for the baser forms of the craft!

The owner of the second establishment lived in a blackwood cabinet — it was profanation to call it a house — alone with a bronze of priceless workmanship, a set of blackwood furniture, and all the medals that his work had won for him in England, France, Germany, and America. He was a very quiet and cat-like man, and spoke almost in a whisper. Would we be pleased to inspect the manufactory? He led us through a garden — it was nothing in his eyes, but we stopped to admire long. Stone lanterns, green with moss, peeped through clumps of papery bamboos where bronze storks were pretending to feed. A dwarfed pine, its foliage trimmed to dish-like plaques, threw its arms far across a fairy pond where the fat, lazy carp grubbed and rooted, and a couple of eared grebes squawked at us from the protection of the

— waterbutt. So perfect was the silence of the place that we heard the cherry blossoms falling into the water and the lisping of the fish against the stones. We were in the very heart of the Willow-Pattern Plate and loath to move for fear of breaking it. The Japanese are born bower-birds. They collect water-worn stones, quaintly shaped rocks, and veined pebbles for the ornamentation of their homes. When they shift house they take the garden away with them — pine trees and all — and the incoming tenant has a free hand.

Half a dozen steps took us over the path of mossy stones to a house where the whole manufactory was at work. One room held the enamel powders all neatly arranged in jars of scrupulous cleanliness, a few blank copper vases ready to be operated on, an invisible bird who whistled and whooped in his cage, and a case of gaily painted butterflies ready for reference when patterns were wanted. In the next room sat the manufactory — three men, five women, and two boys — all as silent as sleep. It is one thing to read of *cloissonnée* making, but quite another to watch it being made. I began to understand the cost of the ware when I saw a man working out a pattern of sprigs and butterflies on a plate about ten inches in diameter. With finest silver ribbon wire, set on edge, less than the sixteenth of an inch high, he followed the curves of the drawing at his side, pinching the wire into tendrils and the serrated outlines of leaves with infinite patience. A rough touch on the raw copper-plate would have sent the pattern flying into a thousand disconnected threads. When all was put down on the copper, the plate would be warmed just sufficiently to allow the wires to stick firmly to the cop-

per, the pattern then showing in raised lines. Followed the colouring, which was done by little boys in spectacles. With a pair of tiniest steel chopsticks they filled from bowls at their sides each compartment of the pattern with its proper hue of paste. There is not much room allowed for error in filling the spots on a butterfly's wing with avanturine enamel when the said wings are less than an inch across. I watched the delicate play of wrist and hand till I was wearied, and the manager showed me his patterns — terrible dragons, clustered chrysanthemums, butterflies, and diapers as fine as frost on a window-pane — all drawn in unerring line. "Those things are our subjects. I compile from them, and when I want some new colours I go and look at those dead butterflies," said he. After the enamel has been filled in, the pot or plate goes to be fired, and the enamel bubbles all over the boundary lines of wires, and the whole comes from the furnace looking like delicate majolica. It may take a month to put a pattern on the plate in outline, another month to fill in the enamel, but the real expenditure of time does not commence till the polishing. A man sits down with the rough article, all his tea-things, a tub of water, a flannel, and two or three saucers full of assorted pebbles from the brook. He does not get a wheel with tripoli, or emery, or buff. He sits down and rubs. He rubs for a month, three months, or a year. He rubs lovingly, with his soul in his finger ends, and little by little the efflorescence of the fired enamel gives way, and he comes down to the lines of silver, and the pattern in all its glory is there waiting for him. I saw a man who had only been a month over the polishing of one little vase five inches high. He would go on for

two months. When I am in America he will be rubbing still, and the ruby-coloured dragon that romped on a field of lazuli, each tiny scale and whisker a separate compartment of enamel, will be growing more lovely.

"There is also cheap *cloissonnée* to be bought," said the manager, with a smile. "We cannot make that. The vase will be seventy dollars."

I respected him for saying "cannot" instead of "do not." There spoke the artist.

Our last visit was paid to the largest establishment in Kioto, where boys made gold inlay on iron, sitting in camphor-wood verandahs overlooking a garden lovelier than any that had gone before. They had been caught young, even as is the custom in India. A real grown-up man was employed on the horrible story, in iron, gold, and silver, of two priests who waked up a Rain-dragon and had to run for it, all round the edge of a big shield; but the liveliest worker of the batch was a small fat baby who had been given a tenpenny nail, a hammer, and a block of metal to play with, that he might soak in the art by which he would live, through the pores of his skin. He crowed and chuckled as he whacked. There are not many five-year-olds in England who could hammer anything without pulping their little pink fingers. The baby had learned how to hit straight. On the wall of the room hung a Japanese painting of the Apotheosis of Art. It represented with fidelity all the processes of pottery from the digging of the clay to the last firing. But all the pencilled scorn of the artist was reserved for the closing scene, where an Englishman, his arm round his wife's waist, was inspecting a shop full of curios. The Japanese are not impressed with the grace of our

clothing or the beauty of our countenances. Later we beheld the manufacture of gold lacquer, which is laid on speck by speck from an agate palette fitted on the artist's thumb; and the carving of ivory, which is exciting until you begin to realise that the graver never slips.

"A lot of their art is purely mechanical" said the Professor, when he was safe back in the hotel.

"So's a lot of ours — 'specially our pictures. Only we can't be spiritedly mechanical," I answered. "Fancy a people like the Japanese solemnly going in for a constitution. Observe! The only two nations with constitution worth having are the English and the Americans. The English can only be artistic in spots and by way of the art of other nations — Sicilian tapestries, Persian saddle-bags, Khoten carpets, and the sweepings of pawnbrokers' shops. The Americans are artistic so long as a few of 'em can buy their Art to keep abreast of the times with. Spain is artistic, but she is also disturbed at intervals; France is artistic, but she must have her revolution every twenty years for the sake of fresh material; Russia is artistic, but she occasionally wishes to kill her Czar, and has no sort of Government; Germany is not artistic, because she experienced religion; and Italy is artistic, because she did very badly. India — "

"When you have finished your verdict on the world, perhaps you'll go to bed."

"Consequently," I continued, with scorn, "I am of opinion that a constitution is the worst thing in the world for a people who are blessed with souls above the average. Now the first demand of the artistic temperament is mundane uncertainty. The second is — "

"Sleep," said the Professor, and left the room.

No. XVII

OF THE NATURE OF THE TOKAIDO AND JAPANESE RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION. ONE TRAVELLER EXPLAINS THE LIFE OF THE SAHIB-LOG, AND ANOTHER THE ORIGIN OF DICE. OF THE BABIES IN THE BATH TUB AND THE MAN IN D. T.

"When I went to Hell I spoke to the man on the road."
— *Old Saw.*

You know the story of the miner who borrowed a dictionary and returned it with the remark that the stories, though interesting in the main, were too various. I have the same complaint to make against Japanese scenery — twelve hours of it by train from Nagoya to Yokohama. About seven hundred years ago the king of those days built a sea-road which he called the Tokaido (or else all the sea-coast was called the Tokaido, but it's of no importance), which road endures to the present. Later on, when the English engineer appeared, he followed the Grand Trunk more or less closely, and the result has been a railway that any nation might take off their hat to. The last section of the through line from Kioto to Yokohama was only opened five days before the Professor and I honoured it with an unofficial inspection.

The accommodation of all kinds is arranged for the benefit of the Japanese; and this is distressing to the foreigner, who expects in a carriage remotely resembling

E. I. R. rolling-stock the conveniences of that pea-green and very dusty old line. But it suits the Japanese admirably: they hop out at every other station — *pro re nata* — and occasionally get left behind. Two days ago they managed to kill a Government official of high standing between a footboard and a platform, and to-day the Japanese papers are seriously discussing the advantages of lavatories. Far be it from me to interfere with the arrangements of an artistic empire; but for a twelve hours' run there might at least be arrangements.

We had left the close-packed cultivation at the foot of the hills and were running along the shores of a great lake, all steel-blue from one end to the other, except where it was dotted with little islands. Then the lake turned into an arm of the sea, and we ran across it on a cut-stone causeway, and the profligacy of the pines ceased, as the trees had to come down from clothing dank hills, and fight with bowed head, outstretched arms, and firmly planted feet, against the sands of the Pacific, whose breakers were spouting and blowing not a quarter of a mile away from the causeway. The Japs know all about forestry. They stake down wandering sand-torrents, which are still allowed to ruin our crops in the Hoshiarpur district, and they plug a shifting sand-dune with wattle dams and pine seedlings as cleverly as they would pin plank to plank. Were their forest officers trained at Nancy, or are they local products? The stake-binding used to hold the sand is of French pattern, and the diagonal planting out of the trees is also French.

Half a minute after the train dropped this desolate, hardly controlled beach it raced through four or five

miles of the suburbs of Patna, but a clean and glorified Patna bowered in bamboo plantations. Then it hit a tunnel and sailed forth into a section of the London, Brighton, and South Coast, or whatever the line is that wants to make the Channel tunnel. At any rate, the embankment was on the beach, and the waves lapped the foot of it, and there was a wall of cut rock to landward. Then we disturbed many villages of fishermen, whose verandahs gave on to the track, and whose nets lay almost under our wheels. The railway was still a new thing in that particular part of the world, for mothers held up their babes to see it.

Any one can keep pace with Indian scenery, arranged as it is in reaches of five hundred miles. This blinding alternation of field, mountain, sea-beach, forest, bamboo grove, and rolling moor covered with azalea blossoms was too much for me, so I sought the society of a man who had lived in Japan for twenty years.

"Yes, Japan's an excellent country as regards climate. The rains begin in May or latter April. June, July, and August are hot months. I've known the thermometer as high as 86° at night, but I'd defy the world to produce anything more perfect than the weather between September and May. When one gets seedy, one goes to the hot springs in the Hakone mountains close to Yokohama. There are heaps of places to recruit in, but we English are a healthy lot. Of course we don't have half as much fun as you do in India. We are a small community, and all our amusements are organised by ourselves for our own benefit — concerts, races, and amateur theatricals and the like. You have heaps of 'em in India, haven't you?"

"Oh, yes!" I said, "we enjoy ourselves awfully, 'specially about this time of the year. I quite understand, though, that small communities dependent on themselves for enjoyment are apt to feel a little slow and isolated — almost bored, in fact. But you were saying — ?"

"Well, living is not very dear, and house rent is. A hundred dollars a month gets you a decent house and you can get one for sixty. But house property is down just now in Yokohama. The races are on in Yokohama to-day and Monday. Are you going? No? You ought to go and see all the foreigners enjoying themselves. But I suppose you've seen much better things in India, haven't you? You haven't anything better than old Fuji — Fujiyama. There he is now to the left of the line. What do you think of him?"

I turned and beheld Fujiyama across a sea of upward-sloping fields and woods. It is about fourteen thousand feet high — not very much, according to our ideas. But fourteen thousand feet above the sea when one stands in the midst of sixteen-thousand-foot peaks, is quite another thing from the same height noted at sea-level in a comparatively flat country. The labouring eye crawls up every foot of the dead crater's smooth flank, and at the summit confesses that it has seen nothing in all the Himalayas to match the monster. I was satisfied. Fujiyama was exactly as I had seen it on fans and lacquer boxes; I would not have sold my sight of it for the crest of Kinchinjunga flushed with the morning. Fujiyama is the keynote of Japan. When you understand the one you are in a position to learn something about the other. I tried to get information from my fellow-traveller.

"Yes, the Japanese are building railways all over the island. What I mean to say is that the companies are started and financed by Japs, and they make 'em pay. I can't quite tell you where the money comes from, but it's all to be found in the country. Japan's neither rich nor poor, but just comfortable. I'm a merchant myself. Can't say that I altogether like the Jap way o' doing business. You can never be certain whether the little beggar means what he says. Give me a Chinaman to deal with. Other men have told you that, have they? You'll find that opinion at most of the treaty ports. But what I will say is, that the Japanese Government is about as enterprising a Government as you could wish, and a good one to have dealings with. When Japan has finished reconstructing herself on the new lines, she'll be quite a respectable little Power. See if she isn't. Now we are coming into the Hakone mountains. Watch the railway. It's rather a curiosity."

We came into the Hakone mountains by way of some Irish scenery, a Scotch trout-stream, a Devonshire combe, and an Indian river running masterless over half a mile of pebbles. This was only the prelude to a set of geological illustrations, including the terraces formed by ancient river-beds, denudation, and half a dozen other ations. I was so busy telling the man from Yokohama lies about the height of the Himalayas that I did not watch things closely, till we got to Yokohama, at eight in the evening, and went to the Grand Hotel, where all the clean and nicely dressed people who were just going in to dinner regarded us with scorn, and men, whom we had met on steamers aforetime, dived into photograph books and pretended not to see us. There's

a deal of human nature in a man — got up for dinner — when a woman is watching him — and you look like a brick-layer — even in Yokohama.

The Grand is the Semi or Cottage Grand really, but you had better go there unless a friend tells you of a better. A long course of good luck has spoiled me for even average hotels. They are too fine and large at the Grand, and they don't always live up to their grandeur; unlimited electric bells, but no one in particular to answer 'em; printed menu, but the first comers eat all the nice things, and so forth. None the less there are points about the Grand not to be despised. It is modelled on the American fashion, and is but an open door through which you may catch the first gust from the Pacific slope. Officially, there are twice as many English as Americans in the port. Actually, you hear no languages but French, German, or American in the street. My experience is sadly limited, but the American I have heard up to the present, is a tongue as distinct from English as Patagonian.

A gentleman from Boston was kind enough to tell me something about it. He defended the use of "I guess" as a Shakespearian expression to be found in *Richard the Third*. I have learned enough never to argue with a Bostonian.

"All right," I said, "I've never heard a real American say 'I guess'; but what about the balance of your extraordinary tongue? Do you mean to say that it has anything in common with ours except the auxiliary verbs, the name of the Creator, and Damn? Listen to the men at the next table."

"They are Westerners," said the man from Boston, as

who should say "observe this cassowary." "They are Westerners, and if you want to make a Westerner mad tell him he is not like an Englishman. They think they are like the English. They are awfully thin-skinned in the West. Now in Boston it's different. *We* don't care what the English people think of us."

The idea of the English people sitting down to think about Boston, while Boston on the other side of the water ostentatiously "didn't care," made me snigger. The man told me stories. He belonged to a Republic. That was why every man of his acquaintance belonged either "to one of the first families in Boston" or else "was of good Salem stock, and his fathers had come over in the *Mayflower*." I felt as though I were moving in the midst of a novel. Fancy having to explain to the casual stranger the blood and breeding of the hero of every anecdote. I wonder whether many people in Boston are like my friend with the Salem families. I am going there to see.

"There's no romance in America — it's all hard, business facts," said a man from the Pacific slope, after I had expressed my opinion about some rather curious murder cases which might have been called miscarriages of justice. Ten minutes later, I heard him say slowly, *apropos* of a game called "Round the Horn" (this is a bad game. Don't play it with a stranger.) "Well, it's a good thing for this game that Omaha came up. Dice were invented in Omaha, and the man who invented 'em he made a colossal fortune."

I said nothing. I began to feel faint. The man must have noticed it. "Six-and-twenty years ago, Omaha came up," he repeated, looking me in the eye, "and the

number of dice that have been made in Omaha since that time is incalculable."

"There is no romance in America," I moaned like a stricken ring-dove, in the Professor's ear. "Nothing but hard business facts, and the first families of Boston, Massachusetts, invented dice at Omaha when it first came up, twenty-six years ago, and that's the solid truth. What am I to do with a people like this?"

"Are you describing Japan or America? For goodness' sake, stick to one or the other," said the Professor.

"It wasn't my fault. There's a bit of America in the bar-room, and on my word it's rather more interesting than Japan. Let's go across to 'Frisco and hear some more lies."

"Let's go and look at photographs, and refrain from mixing our countries or our drinks."

By the way, wherever you go in the Further East be humble to the white trader. Recollect that you are only a poor beast of a buyer with a few dirty dollars in your pockets, and you can't expect a man to demean himself by taking them. And observe humility not only in the shops, but elsewhere. I was anxious to know how I should cross the Pacific to 'Frisco, and very foolishly went to an office where they might, under certain circumstances, be supposed to attend to these things. But no anxiety troubled the sprightly soul who happened to be in the office-chair. "There's heaps of time for finding out later on," he said, "and anyhow, I'm going to the races this afternoon. Come later on." I put my head in the spittoon, and crawled out under the door.

When I am left behind by the steamer it will console me to know that that young man had a good time, and

won heavily. Everybody keeps horses in Yokohama, and the horses are nice little fat little tubs, of the circus persuasion. I didn't go to the races, but a Calcutta man did, and returned saying that "they ran 13–2 cart-horses, and even time for a mile was four minutes and twenty-seven seconds." Perhaps he had lost heavily, but I can vouch for the riding of the few gentlemen I saw outside the animals. It is very impartial and remarkably all round.

Just when the man from Boston was beginning to tell me some more stories about first families, the Professor developed an unholy taste for hot springs, and bore me off to a place called Myanoshita to wash myself. "We'll come back and look at Yokohama later on, but we must go to this because it's so beautiful."

"I'm getting tired of scenery. It's all beautiful and it can't be described, but these men here tell you stories about America. Did you ever hear how the people of Carmel lynched Edward M. Petree for preaching the gospel without making a collection at the end of the service? There's no romance in America — it's all hard business facts. Edward M. Petree was —"

"*Are* you going to see Japan or are you not?"

I went to see. First in a train for one hour in the company of a carriageful of howling Globe-trotters, then in a 'rickshaw for four. You cannot appreciate scenery unless you sit in a 'rickshaw. We struck after seven miles of modified flat — the flattery of Nature that lures you to her more rugged heart — a mountain river all black pools and boiling foam. Him we followed into the hills along a road cut into the crumbling volcanic rock and entirely unmetalled. It was as hard as the Simla

cartroad, but those far hills behind Kalka have no such pine and maple, ash and willow. It was a land of green-clothed cliff and silver waterfall, lovely beyond the defilement of the pen. At every turn in the road whence a view could be commanded, stood a little tea-house full of admiring Japanese. The Jap dresses in blue because he knows that it contrasts well with the colour of the pines. When he dies he goes to a heaven of his own because the colouring of ours is too crude to suit him.

We kept the valley of the glorified stream till the waters sank out of sight down the cliff side and we could but hear them calling to one another through the tangle of the trees. Where the woodlands were lovelier, the gorge deepest, and the colours of the young hornbeam most tender, they had clapped down two vile hostelries of wood and glass, and a village that lived by selling turned wood and glass inlay things to the tourist.

Australians, Anglo-Indians, dwellers in London and the parts beyond the Channel were running up and down the slopes of the hotel garden, and by their strange dresses doing all they knew to deface the landscape. The Professor and I slid down the cliff at the back and found ourselves back in Japan once more. Rough steps took us five or six hundred feet down through dense jungle to the bed of that stream we had followed all the day. The air vibrated with the rush of a hundred torrents, and whenever the eye could pierce the undergrowth it saw a headlong stream breaking itself on a boulder. Up at the hotel we had left the gray chill of a November day and cold that numbed the fingers; down in the gorge we found the climate of Bengal with real steam thrown in. Green bamboo pipes led the hot water

to a score of bathing-houses in whose verandahs Japanese in blue and white dressing-gowns lounged and smoked. From unseen thickets came the shouts of those who bathed, and — oh shame! round the corner strolled a venerable old lady chastely robed in a white bathing towel, and not too much of that. Then we went up the gorge, mopping our brows, and staring to the sky through arches of rampant foliage.

Japanese maids of fourteen or fifteen are not altogether displeasing to behold. I have not seen more than twenty or thirty of them. Of these none were in the least disconcerted at the sight of the stranger. After all, 'twas but Brighton beach without the bathing-gowns. At the head of the gorge the heat became greater, and the hot water more abundant. The joints of the water-pipes on the ground gave off jets of steam; there was vapour rising from boulders on the river-bed, and the stab of a stick into the warm, moist soil was followed by a little pool of warm water. The existing supply was not enough for the inhabitants. They were mining for more in a casual and disconnected fashion. I tried to crawl down a shaft eighteen inches by two feet in the hillside, but the steam, which had no effect on the Japanese hide, drove me out. What happens, I wonder, when the pick strikes the liquid, and the miner has to run or be parboiled?

In the twilight, when we had reached upper earth once more and were passing through the one street of Myanoshita, we saw two small fat cherubs about three years old taking their evening tub in a barrel sunk under the eaves of a shop. They feigned great fear, peeping at us behind outspread fingers, attempting futile dives,

and trying to hide one behind the other in a hundred poses of spankable chubbiness, while their father urged them to splash us. It was the prettiest picture of the day, and one worth coming even to the sticky, paint-reeking hotel to see.

* * * * * * *

He was dressed in a black frock-coat, and at first I took him for a missionary as he mooned up and down the empty corridor.

"I have been under a ban for three days," he whispered in a husky voice, "through no fault of mine — no fault of mine. They told me to take the third watch, but they didn't give me a printed notification which I always require, and the manager of this place says that whisky would hurt me. Through no fault of mine, God knows, no fault of mine!"

I do not like being shut up in an echoing wooden hotel next door to a gentleman of the marine persuasion, who is just recovering from D. T., and who talks to himself all through the dark hours.

No. XVIII

CONCERNING A HOT-WATER TAP, AND SOME GENERAL CONVERSATION.

"Always speak to the stranger. If he doesn't shoot, the chances are he'll answer you." — *Western Proverb.*

It is a far cry from Myanoshita to Michni and Mandalay. That is why we have met men from both those stations, and have spent a cheerful time talking about dacoits and the Black Mountain Expedition. One of the advantages of foreign travel is that one takes such a keen interest in, and hears so much about, Home. Truly, they change their trains, but not their train of thought, who run across the sea.

"This is a most extraordinary place," said the Professor, red as a boiled lobster. "You sit in your bath and turn on the hot or cold spring, as you choose, and the temperature is phenomenal. Let's go and see where it all comes from, and then let's go away."

There is a place called the Burning Mountain five miles in the hills. There went we, through unbroken loveliness of bamboo-copse, pine wood, grass downs, and pine wood again, while the river growled below. In the end we found an impoverished and second-hand Hell, set out orderly on the side of a raw and bleeding hillside. It looked as though a match-factory had been whelmed

by a landslip. Water, in which bad eggs had been boiled, stood in blister-lipped pools, and puffs of thin white smoke went up from the labouring under-earth. Despite the smell and the sulphur incrustations on the black rocks, I was disappointed, till I felt the heat of the ground, which was the heat of a boiler-sheathing. They call the mountain extinct. If untold tons of power, cased in a few feet of dirt, be the Japanese notion of extinction, glad I am that I have not been introduced to a lively volcano. Indeed, it was not an overweening notion of my own importance, but a tender regard for the fire-crust below, and a dread of starting the machinery by accident, that made me step so delicately, and urge return upon the Professor.

"Huh! It's only the boiler of your morning bath. All the sources of the springs are here," said he.

"I don't care. Let 'em alone. Did you never hear of a boiler bursting? Don't prod about with your stick in that amateur way. You'll turn on the tap."

When you have seen a burning mountain you begin to appreciate Japanese architecture. It is not solid. Every one is burned out once or twice casually. A business isn't respectable until it has received its baptism of fire. But fire is of no importance. The one thing that inconveniences a Jap is an earthquake. Consequently, he arranges his house that it shall fall lightly as a bundle of broom upon his head. Still further safeguarding himself, he has no foundations, but the corner-posts rest on the crowns of round stones sunk in the earth. The corner-posts take the wave of the shock, and, though the building may give way like an eel-trap, nothing very serious happens. This is what epicures of earthquakes

aver. I wait for mine own experiences, but not near a suspected district such as the Burning Mountain.

It was only to escape from one terror to another that I fled Myanoshita. A blue-breeched dwarf thrust me into a dwarf 'rickshaw on spidery wheels, and down the rough road that we had taken four hours to climb ran me clamorously in half an hour. Take all the parapets off the Simla Road and leave it alone for ten years. Then run down the steepest four miles of any section, — not steeper than the drop to the old Gaiety Theatre, — behind one man!

"We couldn't get six hill-men to take us in this style," shouted the Professor as he spun by, his wheels kicking like a duck's foot, and the whole contraption at an angle of thirty. I am proud to think that not even sixty hill-men would have gambolled with a sahib in that disgraceful manner. Nor would any tramway company in the Real East have run its cars to catch a train that used to start last year, but now — rest its soul — is as dead as Queen Anne. This thing a queer little seven-mile tramway accomplished with much dignity. It owned a first-class car and a second-class car, — two horses to each, — and it ran them with a hundred yards headway — the one all but empty, and the other half full. When the very small driver could not control his horses, which happened on the average once every two minutes, he did not waste time by pulling them in. He screwed down the brake and laughed — possibly at the company who had paid for the very elaborate car. Yet he was an artistic driver. He wore no Philistine brass badge. Between the shoulders of his blue jerkin were done in white, three rail-heads in a circle, and on the skirts as many tram-wheels

conventionalised. Only the Japanese know how to conventionalise a tram-wheel or make a key-pattern of rail-heads. Though we took twelve hours to cover the thirty miles that separated us from Yokohama, we admitted this much while we waited for our train in a village by the sea. A village of any size is about three miles long in the main street. Villages with a population of more than ten thousand souls take rank as towns.

"And yet," said a man at Yokohama that night, "you have not seen the densest population. That's away in the western *kens* — districts, as you call them. The folk really are crowded thereabouts, but virtually poverty does not exist in the country. You see, an agricultural labourer can maintain himself and his family, as far as rice goes, for four cents a day, and the price of fish is nominal. Rice now costs a hundred pounds to the dollar. What do you make it by Indian standards? From twenty to twenty-five seers the rupee. Yes, that's about it. Well, he gets, perhaps, three dollars and a-half a month. The people spend a good deal in pleasuring. They must enjoy themselves. I don't think they save much. How do they invest their savings? In jewellery? No, not exactly; though you'll find that the women's hair-pins, which are about the only jewellery they wear, cost a good deal. Seven and eight dollars are paid for a good hair-pin, and of course jade may cost anything. What the women really lock their money up in is in their *obis* — the things you call sashes. An *obi* is ten or twelve yards long, and I've known them sold wholesale for fifty dollars each. Every woman above the poorest class has at least one good dress of silk and an *obi*. Yes, all their savings go in dress, and a hand-

some dress is always worth having. The western *kens* are the richest taken all round. A skilled mechanic there gets a dollar or dollar and a-half a day, and, as you know, lacquer-workers and inlayers — artists — get two. There's enough money in Japan for all current expenses. They won't borrow any for railroads. They raise it 'emselves. Most progressive people the Japanese are as regards railways. They make them very cheaply, much more cheaply than any European lines. I've some experience, and I take it that two thousand pounds a mile is the average cost of construction. Not on the Tokaido, of course — the line that you came up by. That's a Government line, State built, and a very expensive one. I'm speaking of the Japanese Railway Company with a mileage of three hundred, and the line from Kobé south, and the Kinshin line in the Southern island. There are lots of little companies with a few score miles of line, but all the companies are extending. The reason why the construction is so cheap is the nature of the land. There's no long haulage of rails, because you can nearly always find a creek running far up into the country, and dump out your rails within a few miles of the place where they are wanted. Then, again, all your timber lies to your hand, and your staff are Japs. There are a few European engineers, but they are quite the heads of the departments, and I believe if they were cleared out tomorrow, the Japs would go on building their lines. They know how to make 'em pay. One line started on a State guarantee of eight per cent. It hasn't called for the guarantee yet. It's making twelve per cent on its own hook. There's a very heavy freight traffic in wood and provisions for the big towns, and there's a local traffic that you

can have no idea of unless you've watched it. The people seem to move in twenty-mile circles for business or pleasure — 'specially pleasure. Oh, I tell you, Japan will be a gridiron of railways before long. In another month or two you'll be able to travel nearly seven hundred miles on and by the Tokaido line alone from one end to the other of the central islands. Getting from east to west is harder work. The backbone-hills of the country are just cruel, and it will be some time before the Japs run many lines across. But they'll do it, of course. Their country must go forward.

"If you want to know anything about their politics, I'm afraid I can't help you much. They are, so to speak, drunk with Western liquor, and are sucking it up by the hogshead. In a few years they will see how much of what we call civilisation they really want, and how much they can discard. 'Tisn't as if they had to learn the arts of life or how to make themselves comfortable. They knew all that long ago. When their railway system is completed, and they begin to understand their new Constitution, they will have learned as much as we can teach 'em. That's my opinion; but it needs time to understand this country. I've been a matter of eight or ten years in it, and my views aren't worth much. I've come to know some of the old families that used to be of the feudal nobility. They keep themselves to themselves and live very quietly. I don't think you'll find many of them in the official classes. Their one fault is that they entertain far beyond their means. They won't receive you informally and take you into their houses. They raise dancing-girls, or take you to their club and have a big feed. They don't introduce you to their wives, and

they haven't yet given up the rule of making the wife eat after the husband. Like the native of India you say? Well, I am very fond of the Jap; but I suppose he *is* a native any way you look at him. You wouldn't think that he is careless in his workmanship and dishonest. A Chinaman, on an average, is out and away a bigger rogue than a Jap; but he has sense enough to see that honesty is the best policy, and to act by that light. A Jap will be dishonest just to save himself trouble. He's like a child that way."

How many times have I had to record such an opinion as the foregoing? Everywhere the foreigner says the same thing of the neat-handed, polite little people that live among flowers and babies, and smoke tobacco as mild as their own manners. I am sorry; but when you come to think of it, a race without a flaw would be perfect. And then all the other nations of the earth would rise up and hammer it to pieces. And then there would be no Japan.

"I'll give you a day to think over things generally," said the Professor. "After that we'll go to Nikko and Tokio. Who has not seen Nikko does not know how to pronounce the world 'beautiful.'"

Yokohama is not the proper place to arrange impressions in. The Pacific Ocean knocks at your door, asking to be looked at; the Japanese and American men-of-war demand serious attention through a telescope; and if you wander about the corridors of the Grand Hotel, you stop to play with Spanish Generals, all gold lace and spurs, or are captured by touts for curio-shops. It is not a nice experience to find a Sahib in a Panama hat handing you the card of his firm for all the

world like a Delhi silk-merchant. You are inclined to pity that man, until he sits down, gives you a cigar, and tells you all about his diseases, his past career in California, where he was always making money and always losing it, and his hopes for the future. You see then that you are entering upon a new world. Talk to every one you meet, if they show the least dispositon to talk to you, and you will gather, as I have done, a host of stories that will be of use to you hereafter. Unfortunately, they are not all fit for publication. When I tore myself away from the distractions of the outer world, and was just sitting down to write seriously on the Future of Japan, there entered a fascinating man, with heaps of money, who had collected Indian and Japanese curios all his life, and was now come to this country to get some old books which his collection lacked. Can you imagine a more pleasant life than his wanderings over the earth, with untold special knowledge to back each signature of his cheque-book?

In five minutes he had carried me far away from the clattering, fidgetty folk around, to a quiet world where men meditated for three weeks over a bronze, and scoured all Japan for a sword-guard designed by a great artist and — were horribly cheated in the end.

"Who is the best artist in Japan now?" I asked.

"He died in Tokio, last Friday, poor fellow, and there is no one to take his place. His name was K——, and as a general rule he could never be persuaded to work unless he was drunk. He did his best pictures when he was drunk."

"*Ému.* Artists are never drunk."

"Quite right. I'll show you a sword-guard that he

designed. All the best artists out here do a lot of designing. K—— used to fritter away his time on designs for old friends. Had he stuck to pictures he could have made twice as much. But he never turned out pot-boilers. When you go to Tokio, make it your business to get two little books of his called *Drunken Sketches* — pictures that he did when he was — *ému*. There is enough dash and go in them to fill half a dozen studios. An English artist studied under him for some time. But K——'s touch was not communicable, though he might have taught his pupil something about technique. Have you ever come across one of K——'s crows? You could tell it anywhere. He could put all the wicked thoughts that ever came into the mind of a crow — and a crow is first cousin to the Devil — on a piece of paper six inches square, with a brush of Indian ink and two turns of his wrist. Look at the sword-guard I spoke of. How is that for feeling?"

On a circular piece of iron four inches in diameter and pierced by the pole for the tang of the blade, poor K——, who died last Friday, had sketched the figure of a coolie trying to fold up a cloth which was bellying to a merry breeze — not a cold wind, but a sportive summer gust. The coolie was enjoying the performance, and so was the cloth. It would all be folded up in another minute and the coolie would go on his way with a grin.

This thing had K—— conceived, and the faithful workman executed, with the lightest touches of the graver, to the end that it might lie in a collector's cabinet in London.

"Wah! Wah!" I said, and returned it reverently. "It would kill a man who could do that to live after his

touch had gone. Well for him he died — but I wish I had seen him. Show me some more."

"I've got a painting by Hokusai — the great artist who lived at the end of the last century and the beginning of this. Even *you* have heard of Hokusai, haven't you?"

"A little. I have heard it was impossible to get a genuine painting with his signature attached."

"That's true; but I've shown this one to the Japanese Government expert in pictures — the man the Mikado consults in cases of doubt — to the first European authority on Japanese art, and of course I have my own opinion to back the signed guarantee of the seller. Look!"

He unrolled a silk-scroll and showed me the figure of a girl in pale blue and grey crêpe, carrying in her arms a bundle of clothes that, as the tub behind her showed, had just been washed. A dark-blue handkerchief was thrown lightly over the left forearm, shoulder, and neck, ready to tie up the clothes when the bundle should be put down. The flesh of the right arm showed through the thin drapery of the sleeve. The right hand merely steadied the bundle from above; the left gripped it firmly from below. Through the stiff blue-black hair showed the outline of the left ear.

That there was enormous elaboration in the picture, from the ornamentation of the hair-pins to the graining of the clogs, did not strike me till after the first five minutes, when I had sufficiently admired the certainty of touch.

"Recollect there is no room for error in painting on silk," said the proud possessor. "The line must stand under any circumstances. All that is possible before

painting is a little dotting with charcoal, which is rubbed off with a feather-brush. Did he know anything about drapery or colour or the shape of a woman? Is there any one who could teach him more if he were alive to-day?"

Then we went to Nikko.

No. XIX

THE LEGEND OF NIKKO FORD AND THE STORY OF THE AVOIDANCE OF MISFORTUNE.

A rose-red city, half as old as Time.

Five hours in the train took us to the beginning of a 'rickshaw journey of twenty-five miles. The guide unearthed an aged cart on Japanese lines, and seduced us into it by promises of speed and comfort beyond anything that a 'rickshaw could offer. Never go to Nikko in a cart. The town of departure is full of pack-ponies who are not used to it, and every third animal tries to get a kick at his friends in the shafts. This renders progress sufficiently exciting till the bumpsomeness of the road quenches all emotions save one. Nikko is reached through one avenue of *cryptomerias* — cypress-like trees eighty feet high, with red or dull silver trunks and hearse-plume foliage of darkest green. When I say one avenue, I mean one continuous avenue twenty-five miles long, the trees so close to each other throughout that their roots interlace and form a wall of wood on either side of the sunken road. Where it was necessary to make a village along the line of march, — that is to say once every two or three miles, — a few of the giants had been wrenched out — as teeth are wrenched from a full-planted jaw — to make room for the houses. Then

the trees closed up as before to mount guard over the road. The banks between which we drove were alight with azaleas, camelias, and violets. "Glorious! Stupendous! Magnificent!" sang the Professor and I in chorus for the first five miles, in the intervals of the bumps. The avenue took not the least notice of our praise except by growing the trees even more closely together. "Vistas of pillared shade" are very pleasant to read about, but on a cold day the ungrateful heart of man could cheerfully dispense with a mile or two of it if that would shorten the journey. We were blind to the beauty around; to the files of pack-ponies with manes like hearth-brooms and the tempers of Eblis kicking about the path; to the pilgrims with blue and white handkerchiefs on their heads, enviable silver-grey leggings on their feet, and Buddha-like babies on their backs; to the trim country drays pulled by miniature cart-horses bringing down copper from the mines and *saki* from the hills; to the colour and movement in the villages where all the little children shouted "Ohio's!" and all the old people laughed. The grey tree-trunks marched us solemnly along over that horrid bad road which had been mended with brushwood, and after five hours we got Nikko in the shape of a long village at the foot of a hill, and capricious Nature, to reward us for our sore bones, laughed on the instant in floods of sunshine. And upon what a mad scene did the light fall! The *cryptomerias* rose in front of us a wall of green darkness, a tearing torrent ran deep-green over blue boulders, and between stream and trees was thrown a blood-red bridge — the sacred bridge of red lacquer that no foot save the Mikado's may press.

Very cunning artists are the Japanese. Long ago a great-hearted king came to Nikko River and looked across at the trees, up-stream at the torrent and the hills whence it came, and down-stream at the softer outlines of the crops and spurs of wooded mountains. "It needs only a dash of colour in the foreground to bring this all together," said he, and he put a little child in a blue and white dressing-gown under the awful trees to judge the effect. Emboldened by his tenderness, an aged beggar ventured to ask for alms. Now it was the ancient privilege of the great to try the temper of their blades upon beggars and such cattle. Mechanically the king swept off the old man's head, for he did not wish to be disturbed. The blood spurted across the granite slabs of the river-ford in a sheet of purest vermilion. The king smiled. Chance had solved the problem for him. "Build a bridge here," he said to the court carpenter, "of just such a colour as that stuff on the stones. Build also a bridge of grey stone close by, for I would not forget the wants of my people." So he gave the little child across the stream a thousand pieces of gold and went his way. He had composed a landscape. As for the blood, they wiped it up and said no more about it; and that is the story of Nikko Bridge. You will not find it in the guide-books.

I followed the voice of the river through a rickety toy-village, across some rough bottom-land, till, crossing a bridge, I found myself among lichened stones, scrub, and the blossoms of spring. A hillside, steep and wooded as the flanks of the red Aravallis, rose on my left; on my right, the eye travelled from village to cropland, crop to towering cypress, and rested at last on the

cold blue of an austere hill-top encircled by streaks of yet unmelted snow. The Nikko hotel stood at the foot of this hill; and the time of the year was May. Then a sparrow came by with a piece of grass in her beak, for she was building her nest; and I knew that the spring was come to Nikko. One is so apt to forget the changes of the year over there with you in India.

Sitting in a solemn line on the banks of the river were fifty or sixty cross-legged images which the untrained eye put down immediately as so many small Buddhas. They had all, even when the lichen had cloaked them with leprosy, the calm port and unwinking regard of the Lord of the World. They are not Buddhas really, but other things — presents from forgotten great men to dead and gone institutions, or else memorials of ancestors. The guide-book will tell you. They were a ghostly crew. As I examined them more closely I saw that each differed from the other. Many of them held in their joined arms a little store of river pebbles, evidently put there by the pious. When I inquired the meaning of the gift from a stranger who passed, he said: "Those so distinguished are images of the God who Plays with Little Children up in the Sky. He tells them stories and builds them houses of pebbles. The stones are put in his arms either that he may not forget to amuse the babies or to prevent his stock running low."

I have no means of telling whether the stranger spoke the truth, but I prefer to believe that tale as gospel truth. Only the Japanese could invent the God who Plays with Little Children. Thereafter the images took a new aspect in my eyes and were no longer "Græco-

Buddhist sculptures," but personal friends. I added a great heap of pebbles to the stock of the cheeriest among them. His bosom was ornamented with small printed slips of prayers which gave him the appearance of a disreputable old parson with his bands in disorder. A little further up the bank of the river was a rough, solitary rock hewn with what men called a Shinto shrine. I knew better: the thing was Hindu, and I looked at the smooth stones on every side for the familiar dab of red paint. On a flat rock overhanging the water were carved certain characters in Sanscrit, remotely resembling those on a Thibetan prayer-wheel. Not comprehending these matters, and grateful that I had brought no guide-book with me, I clambered down to the lip of the river — now compressed into a raging torrent. Do you know the Strid near Bolton — that spot where the full force of the river is pent up in two yards' breadth? The Nikko Strid is an improvement upon the Yorkshire one. The blue rocks are hollowed like soapstone by the rush of the water. They rise above head-level and in spring are tufted with azalea blossom. The stranger of the godlings came up behind me as I basked on a boulder. He pointed up the little gorge of rocks, "Now if I painted that as it stands, every critic in the papers would say I was a liar."

The mad stream came down directly from a blue hill blotched with pink, through a sky-blue gorge also pink-blotched. An obviously impossible pine mounted guard over the water. I would give much to see an accurate representation of that view. The stranger departed growling over some hidden grief — connected with the Academy perhaps.

Hounded on by the Professor, the guide sought me by banks of the river and bade me "come and see temples." Then I fairly and squarely cursed all temples, being stretched at my ease on some warm sand in the hollow of a rock, and ignorant as the grass-shod cattle that tramped the further bank. "Very fine temples," said the guide, "you come and see. By and by temple be shut up because priests make half an hour more time." Nikko time is half an hour ahead of the standard, because the priests of the temples have discovered that travellers arriving at three p.m. try to do all the temples before four — the official hour of closing. This defrauds the church of her dues, so her servants put the clock on, and Nikko, knowing naught of the value of time, is well content.

When I cursed the temples I did a foolish thing, and one for which this poor pen can never make fitting reparation. We went up a hill by way of a flight of grey stone slabs. The *cryptomerias* of the Nikko road were as children to the giants that overshadowed us here. Between their iron-grey boles were flashes of red — the blood-red of the Mikado's bridge. That great king who killed the beggar at the ford had been well pleased with the success of his experiment. Passing under a mighty stone arch we came into a square of splendour alive with the sound of hammers. Thirty or forty men were tapping the pillars and steps of a carnelian shrine heavy with gold. "That," said the guide, impassively, "is a godown. They are renewing the lacquer. First they extract it."

Have you ever "extracted" lacquer from wood? I smote the foot of a pillar with force, and after half a

dozen blows chipped off one small fragment of the stuff, in texture like red horn. Betraying no surprise, I demanded the name of a yet more magnificent shrine across the courtyard. It was red lacquered like the others, but above its main door were carved in open work three apes — one with his hands to his ears, another covering his mouth, and a third blinding his eyes.

"That place," said the guide, "used to be a stable when the Daimio kept his horses there. The monkeys are the three who hear no wrong, say no wrong, and see no wrong."

"Of course," I said. "What a splendid device for a stable where the grooms steal the grain!" I was angry because I had grovelled before a godown and a stable, though the round world cannot hold their equals.

We entered a temple, or a tomb, I do not know which, through a gateway of carven pillars. Eleven of them bore a running pattern of trefoil — the apex pointing earthward — the twelfth had its pattern reversed.

"Make 'em all the same — no good," said the guide, emphatically. "Something sure to come bad by an' by. Make one different all right. Save him so. Nothing happen then."

Unless I am mistaken, that voluntarily breaking of the set was the one sacrifice that the designer had made to the great Gods above who are so jealous of the craft of men. For the rest he had done what he pleased — even as a god might have done — with the wood in its gleaming lacquer sheath, with enamel and inlay and carving and bronze, hammered work, and the work of the inspired chisel. When he went to his account he saved himself from the jealousy of his judges, by pointing to the tre-

foil pillars for proof that he was only a weak mortal and in no sense their equals. Men say that never man has given complete drawings, details, or descriptions of the temples of Nikko. Only a German would try, and he would fail in spirit. Only a Frenchman could succeed in spirit, but he would be inaccurate. I have a recollection of passing through a door with *cloisonnée* hinges, with a golden lintel and red lacquer jambs, with panels of tortoise-shell lacquer and clamps of bronze tracery. It opened into a half-lighted hall on whose blue ceiling a hundred golden dragons romped and spat fire. A priest moved about the gloom with noiseless feet, and showed me a pot-bellied lantern four feet high, that the Dutch traders of old time had sent as a present to the temple. There were posts of red lacquer dusted over with gold, to support the roof. On one post lay a rib of lacquer, six inches thick, that had been carved or punched over with high relief carvings and had set harder than crystal.

The temple steps were of black lacquer, and the frames of the sliding screens red. That money, lakhs and lakhs of money, had been lavished on the wonder impressed me but little. I wished to know who were the men that, when the *cryptomerias* were saplings, had sat down and spent their lives on a niche or corner of the temple, and dying passed on the duty of adornment to their sons, though neither father nor child hoped to see the work completed. This question I asked the guide, who plunged me in a tangle of Daimios and Shoguns, all manifestly extracted from a guide-book.

After a while the builder's idea entered into my soul.

He had said: "Let us build blood-red chapels in a

Cathedral." So they planted the Cathedral three hundred years ago, knowing that tree-boles would make the pillars and the sky the roof.

Round each temple stood a small army of priceless bronze or stone lanterns, stamped, as was everything else, with the three leaves that make the Daimio's crest. The lanterns were dark green or lichened grey, and in no way lightened the gloom of the red. Down below, by the sacred bridge, I believed red was a joyous colour. Up the hillside under the trees and the shadow of the temple eaves I saw that it was the hue of sorrow. When the great king killed the beggar at the ford he did not laugh, as I have said. He was very sorry, and said: "Art is Art, and worth any sacrifice. Take that corpse away and pray for the naked soul." Once, in one of the temple courtyards, nature dared to rebel against the scheme of the hillside. Some forest tree, all unimpressed by the *cryptomerias*, had tossed a torrent of tenderest pink flowers down the face of a grey retaining wall that guarded a cutting. It was as if a child had laughed aloud at some magnificence it could not understand.

"You see that cat?" said the guide, pointing out a pot-bellied pussy painted above a door. "That is the Sleeping Cat. The artist he paint it left-handed. We are proud of that cat."

"And did they let him remain left-handed after he had painted that thing?"

"Oh yes. You see he was always left-handed."

The infinite tenderness of the Japanese towards their children extends, it would seem, even to artists. Every guide will take you to see the Sleeping Cat. Don't go. It is bad. Coming down the hill, I learned that all

Nikko was two feet under snow in the winter, and while I was trying to imagine how fierce red, white, and black-green would look under the light of a winter sun I met the Professor murmuring expletives of admiration.

"What have you done? What have you seen?" said he.

"Nothing. I've accumulated a lot of impressions of no use to any one but the owner."

"Which means you are going to slop over for the benefit of the people in India," said the Professor.

And the notion so disgusted me that I left Nikko that very afternoon, the guide clamouring that I had not seen half its glories. "There is a lake," he said; "there are mountains. You must go see!"

"I will return to Tokio and study the modern side of Japan. This place annoys me because I do not understand it."

"Yet I am *the* good guide of Yokohama," said the guide.

No. XX

SHOWS HOW I GROSSLY LIBELLED THE JAPANESE ARMY, AND EDITED A CIVIL AND MILITARY GAZETTE WHICH IS NOT IN THE LEAST TRUSTWORTHY.

"And the Duke said, 'Let there be cavalry,' and there were cavalry. And he said, 'Let them be slow,' and they were slow, d—d slow, and the Japanese Imperial Horse called he them."

I WAS wrong. I know it. I ought to have clamoured at the doors of the Legation for a pass to see the Imperial Palace. I ought to have investigated Tokio and called upon some of the political leaders of the Liberal and Radical parties. There are a hundred things which I ought to have done, but somehow or other the bugles began to blare through the chill of the morning, and I heard the tramp of armed men under my window. The parade-ground was within a stone's throw of the Tokio hotel; the Imperial troops were going on parade. Would you have bothered your head about politics or temples? I ran after them.

It is rather difficult to get accurate information about the Japanese army. It seems to be in perpetual throes of reorganisation. At present, so far as one can gather, it is about one hundred and seventy thousand strong. Everybody has to serve for three years, but payment of one hundred dollars will shorten the term of service by one year at least. This is what a man who had gone through the mill told me. He capped his information

with this verdict: "English army no use. Only navy any good. Have seen two hundred English army. No use."

On the parade-ground they had a company of foot and a wing of what, for the sake of brevity, I will call cavalry under instruction. The former were being put through some simple evolutions in close order; the latter were variously and singularly employed. To the former I took off the hat of respect; at the latter I am ashamed to say I pointed the finger of derision. But let me try to describe what I saw. The likeness of the Jap infantryman to the Gurkha grows when you see him in bulk. Thanks to their wholesale system of conscription the quality of conscripts varies immensely. I have seen scores of persons with spectacles whom it were base flattery to call soldiers, and who I hope were in the medical or commissariat departments. Again I have seen dozens of bull-necked, deep-chested, flat-backed, thin-flanked little men who were as good as a colonel commanding could desire. There was a man of the 2d Infantry whom I met at an up-country railway station. He carried just the proper amount of insolent swagger that a soldier should, refused to answer any questions of mine, and parted the crowd round him without ceremony. A Gurkha of the Prince of Wales' Own could not have been trimmer. In the crush of a ticket-collecting — we both got out together — I managed to run my hand over that small man's forearm and chest. They must have a very complete system of gymnastics in the Japanese army, and I would have given much to have stripped my friend and seen how he peeled. If the 2d Infantry are equal to sample, they are good.

The men on parade at Tokio belonged either to the 4th or the 9th, and turned out with their cowskin valises strapped, but I think not packed. Under full kit, such as I saw on the sentry at Osaka Castle, they ought to be much too heavily burdened. Their officers were as miserable a set of men as Japan could furnish — spectacled, undersized even for Japan, hollow-backed and hump-shouldered. They squeaked their words of command and had to trot by the side of their men to keep up with them. The Jap soldier has the long stride of the Gurkha, and he doubles with the easy lope of the 'rickshaw coolie. Throughout the three hours that I watched them they never changed formation but once, when they doubled in pairs across the plain, their rifles at the carry. Their step and intervals were as good as those of our native regiments, but they wheeled rather promiscuously, and were not checked for this by their officers. So far as my limited experience goes, their formation was not Ours, but continental. The words of command were as beautifully unintelligible as anything our parade-grounds produce; and between them the officers of each half-company vehemently harangued their men, and shook their swords at 'em in distinctly unmilitary style. The precision of their movements was beyond praise. They enjoyed three hours of steady drill, and in the rare intervals when they stood easy to draw breath I looked for slackness all down the ranks, inasmuch as "standing easy" is the crucial test of men after the first smartness of the morning has worn off. They stood "easy," neither more nor less, but never a hand went to a shoe or stock or button while they were so standing. When they knelt, still in this queer column

of company, I understood the mystery of the long-sword bayonet which has puzzled me sorely. I had expected to see the little fellows lifted into the air as the bayonet-sheath took ground; but they were not. They kicked it sideways as they dropped. All the same, the authorities tie men to the bayonets instead of bayonets to the men. When at the double there was no grabbing at the cartridge pouch with one hand or steadying the bayonet with the other, as may be seen any day at running-firing on Indian ranges. They ran cleanly — as our Gurkhas run.

It was an unchristian thought, but I would have given a good deal to see that company being blooded on an equal number of Our native infantry — just to know how they would work. If they have pluck, and there is not much in their past record to show that they have not, they ought to be first-class enemies. Under British officers instead of the little anatomies at present provided, and with a better rifle, they should be as good as any troops recruited east of Suez. I speak here only for the handy little men I saw. The worst of conscription is that it sweeps in such a mass of fourth and fifth-rate citizens who, though they may carry a gun, are likely, by their own excusable ineptitude, to do harm to the morale and set-up of a regiment. In their walks abroad the soldiery never dream of keeping step. They tie things to their side-arms, they carry bundles, they slouch, and dirty their uniforms.

And so much for a raw opinion on Japanese infantry. The cavalry were having a picnic on the other side of the parade-ground — circling right and left by sections, trying to do something with a troop, and so forth. I would fain

believe that the gentlemen I saw were recruits. But they wore all their arms, and their officers were just as clever as themselves. Half of them were in white fatigue-dress and flat cap, — and wore half-boots of brown leather with short hunting-spurs and black straps; no chains. They carried carbine and sword — the sword fixed to the man, and the carbine slung over the back. No martingales, but breastplates and crupper, a huge, heavy saddle, with single hide-girth, over two *numdahs*, completed the equipment which a thirteen-hand pony, all mane and tail, was trying to get rid of. When you thrust a two-pound bit and bridoon into a small pony's mouth, you hurt his feelings. When the riders wear, as did my friends, white worsted gloves, they cannot take a proper hold of the reins. When they ride with both hands, sitting well on the mount's neck, knuckles level with its ears and the stirrup leathers as short as they can be, the chances of the pony getting rid of the rider are manifestly increased. Never have I seen such a wild dream of equitation as the Tokio parade-ground showed. Do you remember the picture in *Alice in Wonderland*, just before Alice found the Lion and the Unicorn; when she met the armed men coming through the woods? I thought of that, and I thought of the White Knight in the same classic, and I laughed aloud. Here were a set of very fair ponies, sure-footed as goats, mostly entires, and full of go. Under Japanese weights they would have made very thorough mounted infantry. And here was this blindly imitative nation trying to turn them into heavy cavalry. As long as the little beasts were gravely trotting in circles they did not mind their work. But when it came to slashing at the Turk's

head they objected very much indeed. I affiliated myself to a section who, armed with long wooden swords, were enjoying some Turk's-heading. Out started a pony at the gentlest of canters, while the rider bundled all the reins into one hand, and held his sword like a lance. Then the pony shied a little shy, shook his shaggy head, and began to passage round the Turk's head. There was no pressure of knee or rein to tell him what was wanted. The man on top began kicking with the spurs from shoulder to rump, and shaking up the ironmongery in the poor brute's mouth. The pony could neither rear, nor kick, nor buck; but it shook itself free of the incubus who slid off. Three times I saw this happen. The catastrophe didn't rise to the dignity of a fall. It was the blundering collapse of incompetence plus worsted gloves, two-handed riding, and a haystack of equipment. Very often the pony went at the post, and the man delivered a back-handed cut at the Turk's head which nearly brought him out of his world-too-wide saddle. Again and again this solemn performance was repeated. I can honestly say that the ponies are very willing to break rank and leave their companions, which is what an English troop-horse fails in; but I fancy this is more due to the urgent private affairs of the pony than any skill in training. The troops charged once or twice in a terrifying canter. When the men wished to stop they leaned back and tugged, and the pony put his head to the ground, and bored all he knew. They charged me, but I was merciful, and forebore to empty half the saddles, as I assuredly could have done by throwing up my arms and yelling "Hi!" The saddest thing of all was the painful conscientiousness displayed by all the

performers in the circus. They had to turn these rats into cavalry. They knew nothing about riding, and what they did know was wrong; but the rats must be made troop-horses. Why wouldn't the scheme work? There was a patient, pathetic wonder on the faces of the men that made me long to take one of them in my arms and try to explain things to him — bridles, for instance, and the futility of hanging on by the spurs. Just when the parade was over, and the troops were ambling off, Providence sent diagonally across the parade-ground, at a gallop, a big, rawboned man on a lathy-red American horse. The brute cracked his nostrils, and switched his flag abroad, and romped across the plain, while his rider dropped one hand and sat still, swaying lightly from the hips. The two served to scale the surroundings. Some one really ought to tell the Mikado that ponies were never intended for dragoons.

If the changes and chances of military service ever send you against Japanese troops, be tender with their cavalry. They mean no harm. Put some fusees down for the horses to step on, and send a fatigue-party out to pick up the remnants. But if you meet Japanese infantry, led by a Continental officer, commence firing early and often and at the longest ranges compatible with getting at them. They are bad little men who know too much.

Having thoroughly settled the military side of the nation exactly as my Japanese friend at the beginning of this letter settled Us, — on the strength of two hundred men caught at random, — I devoted myself to a consideration of Tokio. I am wearied of temples. Their monotony of splendour makes my head ache. You also

will weary of temples unless you are an artist, and then you will be disgusted with yourself. Some folk say that Tokio covers an area equal to London. Some folk say that it is not more than ten miles long and eight miles broad. There are a good many ways of solving the question. I found a tea-garden situated on a green plateau far up a flight of steps, with pretty girls smiling on every step. From this elevation I looked forth over the city, and it stretched away from the sea, as far as the eye could reach — one grey expanse of packed house-roof, the perspective marked by numberless factory chimneys. Then I went several miles away and found a park, another eminence, and some more tea-girls prettier than the last; and, looking again, the city stretched out in a new direction as far as the eye could reach. Taking the scope of the eye on a clear day at eighteen miles, I make Tokio thirty-six miles long by thirty-six miles broad exactly; and there may be some more which I missed. The place roared with life through all its quarters. Double lines of trams ran down the main streets for mile on mile, rows of omnibuses stood at the principal railway station, and the "Compagnie General des Omnibus de Tokio" paraded the streets with gold and vermilion cars. All the trams were full, all the private and public omnibuses were full, and the streets were full of 'rickshaws. From the sea-shore to the shady green park, from the park to the dim distance, the land pullulated with people.

Here you saw how Western civilisation had eaten into them. Every tenth man was attired in Europe clothes from hat to boots. It is a queer race. It can parody every type of humanity to be met in a large

English town. Fat and prosperous merchant with mutton-chop whiskers; mild-eyed, long-haired professor of science, his clothes baggy about him; schoolboy in Eton jacket, broadcloth trousers; young clerk, member of the Clapham Athletic Club in tennis flannels; artisans in sorely worn tweeds; top-hatted lawyer with clean-shaven upper lip and black leather bag; sailor out of work; and counter-jumper; all these and many, many more you shall find in the streets of Tokio in half an hour's walk. But when you come to speak to the imitation, behold it can only talk Japanese. You touch it, and it is not what you thought. I fluctuated down the streets addressing myself to the most English-looking folk I saw. They were polite with a graciousness that in no way accorded with their raiment, but they knew not a word of my tongue. One small boy in the uniform of the Naval College said suddenly: "I spik Englees," and collapsed. The rest of the people in our clothes poured their own vernacular upon my head. Yet the shop-signs were English, the tramway under my feet was English gauge, the commodities sold were English, and the notices on the streets were in English. It was like walking in a dream. I reflected. Far away from Tokio and off the line of rail I had met men like these men in the streets. Perfectly dressed Englishmen to the outer eye, but dumb. The country must be full of their likes.

"Good gracious! Here is Japan going to run its own civilisation without learning a language in which you can say Damn satisfactorily. I must inquire into this."

Chance had brought me opposite the office of a newspaper, and I ran in demanding an editor. He came—

the Editor of the *Tokio Public Opinion*, a young man in a black frock-coat. There are not many editors in other parts of the world who would offer you tea and a cigarette ere beginning a conversation. My friend had but little English. His paper, though the name was printed in English, was Japanese. But he knew his business. Almost before I had explained my errand, which was the pursuit of miscellaneous information, he began: "You are English. How you think now the American Revision Treaty?" Out came a note-book and I sweated cold. It was not in the bargain that he should interview me.

"There's a great deal," I answered, remembering Sir Roger, of blessed memory, — "a great deal to be said on both sides. The American Revision Treaty — h'm — demands an enormous amount of matured consideration and may safely be referred —"

"But we of Japan are now civilised."

Japan says that she is now civilised. That is the crux of the whole matter so far as I understand it. "Let us have done with the idiotic system of treaty-ports and passports for the foreigner who steps beyond them," says Japan in effect. "Give us our place among the civilised nations of the earth, come among us, trade with us, hold land in our midst. Only be subject to our jurisdiction and submit to our — tariffs." Now since one or two of the foreign nations have won special tariffs for their goods in the usual way, they are not over-anxious to become just ordinary folk. The effect of accepting Japan's views would be excellent for the individual who wanted to go up-country and make his money, but bad for the nation. For Our nation in particular.

All the same I was not prepared to have my ignorance of a burning question put down in any note-book save my own. I Gladstoned about the matter with the longest words I could. My friend recorded them much after the manner of Count Smorltork. Then I attacked him on the subject of civilisation — speaking very slowly because he had a knack of running two words of mine together, and turning them into something new.

"You are right," said he. "We are becoming civilised. But not too quick, for that is bad. Now there are two parties in the State — the Liberal and the Radical: one Count he lead one, one Count lead the other. The Radical say that we should swiftly become all English. The Liberal he says not so quick, because that nation which too swiftly adopt other people's customs he decay. That question of civilisation and the American Revision Treaty he occupied our chief attentions. Now we are not so zealous to become civilised as we were two — three years gone. Not so quick — that is our watchword. Yes."

If matured deliberation be the wholesale adoption of imperfectly understood arrangements, I should dearly like to see Japan in a hurry. We discussed comparative civilisations for a short time, and I protested feebly against the defilement of the streets of Tokio by rows of houses built after glaring European models. Surely there is no need to discard your own architecture, I said.

"Ha," snorted the chief of the *Public Opinion*. "You call it picturesque. I call it too. Wait till he light up — incendiate. A Japanese house then is one only fire box. *That* is why we think good to build in European fashion. I tell you, and you must believe, that we take

up no change without thinking upon it. Truth, indeed, it is not because we are curious children, wanting new things, as some people have said. We have done with that season of picking up things and throwing them down again. You see?"

"Where did you pick up your Constitution, then?"

I did not know what the question would bring forth, yet I ought to have been wise. The first question that a Japanese on the railway asks an Englishman is: "Have you got the English translation of our Constitution?" All the book-stalls sell it in English and Japanese, and all the papers discuss it. The child is not yet three months old.

"Our Constitution? — That was promised to us — promised twenty years ago. Fourteen years ago the provinces they have been allowed to elect their big men — their heads. Three years ago they have been allowed to have assemblies, and thus Civil Liberty was assured."

I was baffled here for some time. In the end I thought I made out that the municipalities had been given certain control over police funds and the appointment of district officials. I may have been entirely wrong, but the editor bore me along on a torrent of words, his body rocking and his arms waving with the double agony of twisting a foreign tongue to his service and explaining the to-be-taken-seriouslyness of Japan. Whack come the little hand on the little table, and the little tea-cups jumped again.

"Truly, and indeed, this Constitution of ours has *not* come too soon. It proceeded step-by. You understand that? Now your Constitution, the Constitutions of the

foreign nations, are all bloody — bloody Constitutions. Ours has come step-by. We did not fight as the barons fought with King John at Runnymede."

This was a quotation from a speech delivered at Otsu, a few days previously, by a member of the Government. I grinned at the brotherhood of editors all the world over. Up went the hand anew.

"We shall be happy with this Constitution and a people civilised among civilisations."

"Of course. But what will you actually do with it? A Constitution is rather a monotonous thing to work after the fun of sending members to Parliament has died out. You have a Parliament, have you not?"

"Oh yes, *with* parties — Liberal and Radical."

"Then they will both tell lies to you and to each other. Then they will pass bills, and spend their time fighting each other. Then all the foreign governments will discover that you have no fixed policy."

"Ah, yes. But the Constitution." The little hands were crossed in his lap. The cigarette hung limply from his mouth.

"No fixed policy. Then, when you have sufficiently disgusted the foreign Powers, they will wait until the Liberals and Radicals are fighting very hard, and then they will blow you out of the water."

"You are not making fun? I do not quite understand," said he. "Your Constitutions are all so bloody."

"Yes. That is exactly what they are. You are very much in earnest about yours, are you not?"

"Oh yes, we all talk politics now."

"And write politics, of course. By the way, under what — h'm, arrangements with the Government is a Japanese

paper published? I mean, must you pay anything before starting a press?"

"Literary, scientific, and religious papers — no. Quite free. All purely political papers pay five hundred yen — give to the Government to keep, or else some man says he will pay."

"You must give security, you mean?"

"I do not know, but sometimes the Government can keep the money. We are purely political."

Then he asked questions about India, and appeared astonished to find that the natives there possessed considerable political power, and controlled districts.

"But have you a Constitution in India?"

"I am afraid that we have not."

"Ah!"

He crushed me there, and I left very humbly, but cheered by the promise that the *Tokio Public Opinion* would contain an account of my words. Mercifully, that respectable journal is printed in Japanese, so the hash will not be served up to a large table. I would give a good deal to discover what meaning he attached to my forecast of Constitutional government in Japan.

"We all talk politics now." That was the sentence which remained to me. It was true talk. Men of the Educational Department in Tokio told me that the students would "talk politics" by the hour if you allowed them. At present they were talking in the abstract about their new plaything, the Constitution, with its Upper House and its Lower House, its committees, its questions of supply, its rules of procedure, and all the other skittles we have played with for six hundred years.

Japan is the second Oriental country which has made

it impossible for a strong man to govern alone. This she has done of her own free will. India, on the other hand, has been forcibly ravished by the Secretary of State and the English M. P.

Japan is luckier than India.

No. XXI

SHOWS THE SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE BABU AND THE JAPANESE. CONTAINS THE EARNEST OUTCRY OF AN UNBELIEVER. THE EXPLANATION OF MR. SMITH OF CALIFORNIA AND ELSEWHERE. TAKES ME ON BOARD SHIP AFTER DUE WARNING TO THOSE WHO FOLLOW.

Very sadly did we leave it, but we gave our hearts in pledge
To the pine above the city, to the blossoms by the hedge,
To the cherry and the maple and the plum tree and the peach,
And the babies — Oh, the babies ! — romping fatly under each.
Eastward ho ! Across the water see the black bow drives and swings
From the land of Little Children, where the Babies are the Kings.

The Professor discovered me in meditation amid tea-girls at the back of the Ueno Park in the heart of Tokio. My 'rickshaw coolie sat by my side drinking tea from daintiest china, and eating maccaroons. I thought of Sterne's donkey and smiled vacuously into the blue above the trees. The tea-girls giggled. One of them captured my spectacles, perched them on her own snubby-chubby nose, and ran about among her cackling fellows.

"And loose thy fingers in the tresses of The cypress-slender minister of wine," quoted the Professor, coming round a booth suddenly. "Why aren't you at the Mikado's garden party ?"

"Because he didn't invite me, and, anyhow, he wears

Europe clothes — so does the Empress — so do all the Court people. Let's sit down and consider things. This people puzzles me."

And I told my story of the interview with the Editor of the *Tokio Public Opinion*. The Professor had been making investigation into the Educational Department. "And further," said he at the end of the tale, "the ambition of the educated student is to get a place under Government. Therefore he comes to Tokio: will accept any situation at Tokio that he may be near to his chance."

"Whose son is that student?"

"Son of the peasant, yeoman farmer, and shopkeeper, *ryot*, *tehsildar*, and *bunnia*. While he waits he imbibes Republican leanings on account of the nearness of Japan to America. He talks and writes and debates, and is convinced he can manage the Empire better than the Mikado."

"Does he go away and start newspapers to prove that?"

"He may; but it seems to be unwholesome work. A paper can be suspended without reason given under the present laws; and I'm told that one enterprising editor has just got three years' simple imprisonment for caricaturing the Mikado."

"Then there is yet hope for Japan. I can't quite understand how a people with a taste for fighting and quick artistic perceptions can care for the things that delight our friends in Bengal."

"You make the mistake of looking on the Bengali as unique. So he is in his own peculiar style; but I take it that the drunkenness of Western wine affects all

Oriental folk in much the same way. What misleads you is that very likeness. Followest thou? Because a Jap struggles with problems beyond his grip in much the same phraseology as a Calcutta University student, and discusses Administration with a capital A, you lump Jap and Chatterjee together."

"No, I don't. Chatterjee doesn't sink his money in railway companies, or sit down and provide for the proper sanitation of his own city, or of his own notion cultivate the graces of life, as the Jap does. He is like the *Tokio Public Opinion* — 'purely political.' He has no art whatever, he has no weapons, and there is no power of manual labour in him. Yet he is like the Jap in the pathos of his politics. Have you ever studied Pathetic Politics? *Why* is he like the Jap?"

"Both drunk, I suppose," said the Professor. "Get that girl to give back your gig-lamps, and you will be able to see more clearly into the soul of the Far East."

"The 'Far East' hasn't got a soul. She swapped it for a Constitution on the Eleventh of February last. Can any Constitution make up for the wearing of Europe clothes? I saw a Jap lady just now in full afternoon calling-kit. She looked atrocious. Have you seen the later Japanese art — the pictures on the fans and in the shop windows? They are faithful reproductions of the changed life — telegraph poles down the streets, conventionalised tram-lines, top-hats, and carpet-bags in the hands of the men. The artists can make those things almost passable, but when it comes to conventionalising a Europe dress, the effect is horrible."

"Japan wishes to take her place among civilised nations," said the Professor.

"That's where the pathos comes in. It's enough to make you weep to watch this misdirected effort — this wallowing in unloveliness for the sake of recognition at the hands of men who paint their ceilings white, their grates black, their mantelpieces French grey, and their carriages yellow and red. The Mikado wears blue and gold and red, his guards wear orange breeches with a stone-blue stripe down them; the American missionary teaches the Japanese girl to wear bangs — "shingled bangs" — on her forehead, plait her hair into a pigtail, and to tie it up with magenta and cobalt ribbons. The German sells them the offensive chromos of his own country and the labels of his beer-bottles. Allen and Ginter devastate Tokio with their blood-red and grass-green tobacco-tins. And in the face of all these things the country wishes to progress toward civilisation! I have read the entire Constitution of Japan, and it is dearly bought at the price of one of the kaleidoscope omnibuses plying in the street there."

"Are you going to inflict all that nonsense on them at home?" said the Professor.

"I am. For this reason. In the years to come, when Japan has sold her birthright for the privilege of being cheated on equal terms by her neighbours; when she has so heavily run into debt for her railways and public works that the financial assistance of England and annexation is her only help; when the Daimios through poverty have sold the treasures of their houses to the curio-dealer, and the dealer has sold them to the English collector; when all the people wear slop-trousers and ready-made petticoats, and the Americans have established soap factories on the rivers and a boarding-house

on the top of Fujiyama, some one will turn up the files of the *Pioneer* and say: 'This thing was prophesied.' Then they will be sorry that they began tampering with the great sausage-machine of civilisation. What is put into the receiver must come out at the spout; but it must come out mincemeat. *Dixi!* And now let us go to the tomb of the Forty-Seven Ronins."

"It has been said some time ago, and much better than you can say it," said the Professor, *apropos* of nothing that I could see.

Distances are calculated by the hour in Tokio. Forty minutes in a 'rickshaw, running at full speed, will take you a little way into the city; two hours from the Ueno Park brings you to the tomb of the famous Forty-Seven, passing on the way the very splendid temples of Shiba, which are all fully described in the guide-books. Lacquer, gold-inlaid bronze-work, and crystals carved with the words "Om" and "Shri" are fine things to behold, but they do not admit of very varied treatment in print. In one tomb of one of the temples was a room of lacquer panels overlaid with gold leaf. An animal of the name of V. Gay had seen fit to scratch his entirely uninteresting name on the gold. Posterity will take note that V. Gay never cut his fingernails, and ought not to have been trusted with anything prettier than a hog-trough.

"It is the handwriting upon the wall," I said.

"Presently there will be neither gold nor lacquer — nothing but the finger-marks of foreigners. Let us pray for the soul of V. Gay all the same. Perhaps he was a missionary."

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The Japanese papers occasionally contain, sandwiched between notes of railway, mining, and tram concessions, announcements like the following: "Dr. —— committed *hara-kiri* last night at his private residence in such and such a street. Family complications are assigned as the reason of the act." Nor does *hara-kiri* merely mean suicide by any method. *Hara-kiri* is *hara-kiri*, and the private performance is even more ghastly than the official one. It is curious to think that any one of the dapper little men with top-hats and reticules who have a Constitution of their own, may in time of mental stress, strip to the waist, shake their hair over their brows, and, after prayer, rip themselves open. When you come to Japan, look at Farsari's *hara-kiri* pictures and his photos of the last crucifixion (twenty years ago) in Japan. Then at Deakin's, inquire for the modelled head of a gentleman who was not long ago executed in Tokio. There is a grim fidelity in the latter work of art that will make you uncomfortable. The Japanese, in common with the rest of the East, have a strain of blood-thirstiness in their compositions. It is very carefully veiled now, but some of Hokusai's pictures show it, and show that not long ago the people revelled in its outward expression. Yet they are tender to all children beyond the tenderness of the West, courteous to each other beyond the courtesy of the English, and polite to the foreigner alike in the big towns and in the Mofussil. What they will be after their Constitution has been working for three generations the Providence that made them what they are alone knows!

All the world seems ready to proffer them advice. Colonel Olcott is wandering up and down the country

now, telling them that the Buddhist religion needs reformation, offering to reform it, and eating with ostentation rice gruel which is served to him in cups by admiring handmaidens. A wanderer from Kioto tells me that in the Chion-in, loveliest of all the temples, he saw only three days ago the Colonel mixed up with a procession of Buddhist priests, just such a procession as the one I tried vainly to describe, and "tramping about as if the whole show belonged to him." You cannot appreciate the solemnity of this until you have seen the Colonel and the Chion-in temple. The two are built on entirely different lines, and they don't seem to harmonise. It only needs now Madame Blavatsky, cigarette in mouth, under the *cryptomerias* of Nikko, and the return of Mr. Caine, M. P., to preach the sin of drinking *saki*, and the menagerie would be full.

Something should be done to America. There are many American missionaries in Japan, and some of them construct clapboard churches and chapels for whose ugliness no creed could compensate. They further instil into the Japanese mind wicked ideas of "Progress," and teach that it is well to go ahead of your neighbour, to improve your situation, and generally to thresh yourself to pieces in the battle of existence. They do not mean to do this; but their own restless energy enforces the lesson. The American is objectionable. And yet — this is written from Yokohama — how pleasant in every way is a nice American whose tongue is cleansed of "right there," "all the time," "noos," "revoo," "raound," and the Falling Cadence. I have met such an one even now — a Californian ripened in Spain, matured in England, polished in Paris, and yet

always a Californian. His voice and manners were soft alike, temperate were his judgments and temperately expressed, wide was his range of experience, genuine his humour, and fresh from the mint of his mind his reflections. It was only at the end of the conversation that he startled me a little.

"I understand that you are going to stay some time in California. Do you mind my giving you a little advice? I am speaking now of towns that are still rather brusque in their manners. When a man offers you a drink accept at once, and then stand drinks all round. I don't say that the second part of the programme is as necessary as the first, but it puts you on a perfectly safe footing. Above all, remember that where you are going you must never carry anything. The men you move among will do that for you. They have been accustomed to it. It is in some places, unluckily, a matter of life and death as well as daily practice to draw first. I have known really lamentable accidents occur from a man carrying a revolver when he did not know what to do with it. Do you understand anything about revolvers?"

"N–no," I stammered, "of course not."

"Do you think of carrying one?"

"Of course not. I don't want to kill myself."

"Then you are safe. But remember you will be moving among men who go heeled, and you will hear a good deal of talk about the thing and a great many tall stories. You may listen to the yarns, but you must not conform to the custom however much you may feel tempted. You invite your own death if you lay your hand on a weapon you don't understand. No man flourishes a revolver in a bad place. It is produced for one specified purpose and produced before you can wink."

"But surely if you draw first you have an advantage over the other man," said I, valorously.

"You think so? Let me show you. I have no use for any weapon, but I believe I have one about me somewhere. An ounce of demonstration is worth a ton of theory. Your pipe-case is on the table. My hands are on the table too. Use that pipe case as a revolver and as quickly as you can."

I used it in the approved style of the penny dreadful — pointed it with a stiff arm at my friend's head. Before I knew how it came about the pipe case had quitted my hand, which was caught close to the funny-bone and tingled horribly. I heard four persuasive clicks under the table almost before I knew that my arm was useless. The gentleman from California had jerked out his pistol from its pocket and drawn the trigger four times, his hand resting on his hip while I was lifting my right arm.

"Now, do you believe?" he said. "Only an Englishman or an Eastern man fires from the shoulder in that melodramatic manner. I had you safe before your arm went out, merely because I happened to know the trick; and there are men out yonder who in a trouble could hold me as safe as I held you. They don't reach round for their revolver, as novelists say. It's here in front, close to the second right brace-button, and it is fired, without aim, at the other man's stomach. You will understand now why in event of a dispute you should show very clearly that you are unarmed. You needn't hold up your hands ostentatiously; keep them out of your pockets, or somewhere where your friend can see them. No man will touch you then. Or if he does, he is pretty sure to be shot by the general sense of the room."

"That must be a singular consolation to the corpse," I said.

"I see I've misled you. Don't fancy that any part in America is as free and easy as my lecture shows. Only in a few really tough towns do you require *not* to own a revolver. Elsewhere you are all right. Most Americans of my acquaintance have got into the habit of carrying something; but it's only a habit. They'd never dream of using it unless they are hard pressed. It's the man who draws to enforce a proposition about canning peaches, orange-culture, or town lots or water-rights that's a nuisance."

"Thank you," I said faintly. "I purpose to investigate these things later on. I'm much obliged to you for your advice."

When he had departed it struck me that, in the language of the East, "he might have been pulling my leg." But there remained no doubt whatever as to his skill with the weapon he excused so tenderly.

I put the case before the Professor. "We will go to America before you forejudge it altogether," said he. "To America in an American ship will we go, and say good-by to Japan." That night we counted the gain of our sojourn in the Land of Little Children more closely than many men count their silver. Nagasaki with the grey temples, green hills, and all the wonder of a first-seen shore; the Inland Sea, a thirty-hour panorama of passing islets drawn in grey and buff and silver for our delight; Kobé, where we fed well and went to a theatre; Osaka of the canals and the peach blossom; Kioto — happy, lazy, sumptuous Kioto, and the blue rapids and innocent delights of Arashima; Otzu on the shoreless,

rainy lake; Myanoshita in the hills; Kamakura by the tumbling Pacific, where the great god Buddha sits and equably hears the centuries and the seas murmur in his ears; Nikko, fairest of all places under the sun; Tokio, the two-thirds civilised and altogether progressive warren of humanity; and composite Franco-American Yokohama; we renewed them all, sorting out and putting aside our special treasures of memory. If we stayed longer, we might be disillusioned, and yet — surely, that would be impossible.

"What sort of mental impression do you carry away?" said the Professor.

"A tea-girl in fawn-coloured crêpe under a cherry tree all blossom. Behind her, green pines, two babies, and a hog-backed bridge spanning a bottle-green river running over blue boulders. In the foreground a little policeman in badly fitting Europe clothes drinking tea from blue and white china on a black lacquered stand. Fleecy white clouds above and a cold wind up the street," I said, summarising hastily.

"Mine is a little different. A Japanese boy in a flat-headed German cap and baggy Eton jacket; a King taken out of a toy-shop, a railway taken out of a toy-shop, hundreds of little Noah's Ark trees and fields made of green-painted wood. The whole neatly packed in a camphor-wood box with an explanatory book called the Constitution — price twenty cents."

"You looked on the darker side of things. But what's the good of writing impressions? Every man has to get his own at first hand. Suppose I give an itinerary of what we saw?"

"You couldn't do it," said the Professor, blandly.

"Besides, by the time the next Anglo-Indian comes this way there will be a hundred more miles of railway and all the local arrangements will have changed. Write that a man should come to Japan without any plans. The guide-books will tell him a little, and the men he meets will tell him ten times more. Let him get first a good guide at Kobé, and the rest will come easily enough. An itinerary is only a fresh manifestation of that unbridled egoism which —"

"I shall write that a man can do himself well from Calcutta to Yokohama, stopping at Rangoon, Moulmein, Penang, Singapur, Hong-Kong, Canton, and taking a month in Japan, for about sixty pounds — rather less than more. But if he begins to buy curios, that man is lost. Five hundred rupees cover his month in Japan and allow him every luxury. Above all, he should bring with him thousands of cheroots — enough to serve him till he reaches 'Frisco. Singapur is the last place on the line where you can buy Burmas. Beyond that point wicked men sell Manila cigars with fancy names for ten, and Havanas for thirty-five, cents. No one inspects your boxes till you reach 'Frisco. Bring, therefore, at least one thousand cheroots."

"Do you know, it seems to me you have a very queer sense of proportion?"

And that was the last word the Professor spoke on Japanese soil.

No. XXII

SHOWS HOW I CAME TO AMERICA BEFORE MY TIME AND WAS MUCH SHAKEN IN BODY AND SOUL.

"Then spoke der Captain Stossenheim
Who had theories of God,
'Oh, Breitmann, this is judgment on
Der ways dot you have trod.
You only lifs to enjoy yourself
While you yourself agree
Dot self-development requires
Der religious Idee.'"

This is America. They call her the *City of Peking*, and she belongs to the Pacific Mail Company, but for all practical purposes she is the United States. We are divided between missionaries and generals — generals who were at Vicksburg and Shiloh, and German by birth, but more American than the Americans, who in confidence tell you that they are not generals at all, but only brevet majors of militia corps. The missionaries are perhaps the queerest portion of the cargo. Did you ever hear an English minister lecture for half an hour on the freight-traffic receipts and general working of, let us say, the Midland? The Professor has been sitting at the feet of a keen-eyed, close-bearded, swarthy man who expounded unto him kindred mysteries with a fluency and precision that a city leader-writer might have envied. "Who's your

financial friend with the figures at his fingers' ends?" I asked. "Missionary — Presbyterian Mission to the Japs," said the Professor. I laid my hand upon my mouth and was dumb.

As a counterpoise to the missionaries, we carry men from Manila — lean Scotchmen who gamble once a month in the Manila State lottery and occasionally turn up trumps. One, at least, drew a ten-thousand-dollar prize last December and is away to make merry in the New World. Everybody on the staff of an American steamer this side the Continent seems to gamble steadily in that lottery, and the talk of the smoking-room runs almost entirely on prizes won by accident or lost through a moment's delay. The tickets are sold more or less openly at Yokahama and Hong-Kong, and the drawings — losers and winners both agree here — are above reproach.

We have resigned ourselves to the infinite monotony of a twenty days' voyage. The Pacific Mail advertises falsely. Only under the most favorable circumstances of wind and steam can their under-engined boats cover the distance in fifteen days. Our *City of Peking*, for instance, had been jogging along at a gentle ten knots an hour, a pace out of all proportion to her bulk. "When we get a wind," says the Captain, "we shall do better." She is a four-master and can carry any amount of canvas. It is not safe to run steamers across this void under the poles of Atlantic liners. The monotony of the sea is paralysing. We have passed the wreck of a little sealing-schooner lying bottom up and covered with gulls. She weltered by in the chill dawn, unlovely as the corpse of a man;

and the wild birds piped thinly at us as they steered her across the surges. The pulse of the Pacific is no little thing even in the quieter moods of the sea. It set our bows swinging and nosing and ducking ere we were a day clear of Yokohama, and yet there was never swell nor crested wave in sight. "We ride very high," said the Captain, "and she's a dry boat. She has a knack of crawling over things somehow; but we shan't need to put her to the test this journey."

* * * * * * *

The Captain was mistaken. For four days we have endured the sullen displeasure of the North Pacific, winding up with a night of discomfort. It began with a grey sea, flying clouds, and a head-wind that smote fifty knots off the day's run. Then rose from the southeast a beam sea warranted by no wind that was abroad upon the waters in our neighbourhood, and we wallowed in the trough of it for sixteen mortal hours. In the stillness of the harbour, when the newspaper man is lunching in her saloon and the steam-launch is crawling round her sides, a ship of pride is a "stately liner." Out in the open, one rugged shoulder of a sea between you and the horizon, she becomes "the old hooker," a "lively boat," and other things of small import, for this is necessary to propitiate the Ocean. "There's a storm to the southeast of us," explained the Captain. "That's what's kicking up this sea."

The *City of Peking* did not belie her reputation. She crawled over the seas in liveliest wise, never shipping a bucket till — she was forced to. Then she took it green over the bows to the vast edification of, at least,

one passenger who had never seen the scuppers full before.

Later in the day the fun began. "Oh, she's a daisy at rolling," murmured the chief steward, flung starfish-wise on a table among his glassware. "She's rolling some," said a black apparition new risen from the stoke-hold. "Is she going to roll any more?" demanded the ladies grouped in what ought to have been the ladies' saloon, but, according to American custom, was labelled "Social Hall."

Passed in the twilight the chief officer — a dripping, bearded face. "Shall I mark out the bull-board?" said he, and lurched aft, followed by the tongue of a wave. "She'll roll her guards under to-night," said a man from Louisiana, where their river-steamers do not understand the meaning of bulwarks. We dined to a dashing accompaniment of crockery, the bounds of emancipated beer-bottles livelier than their own corks, and the clamour of the ship's gong broken loose and calling to meals on its own account.

After dinner the real rolling began. She did roll "guards under," as the Louisiana man had prophesied. At thirty-minute intervals to the second arrived one big sea, when the electric lamps died down to nothing, and the screw raved and the blows of the sea made the decks quiver. On those occasions we moved from our chairs, not gently, but discourteously. At other times we were merely holding on with both hands.

It was then that I studied Fear — Terror bound in black silk and fighting hard with herself. For reasons which will be thoroughly understood, there was a tendency among the passengers to herd together and to address in-

quiries to every officer who happened to stagger through the saloon. No one was in the least alarmed, — oh dear, no, — but all were keenly anxious for information. This anxiety redoubled after a more than usually vicious roll. Terror was a large, handsome, and cultured lady who knew the precise value of human life, the inwardness of *Robert Elsmere,* the latest poetry — everything in fact that a clever woman should know. When the rolling was near its worst, she began to talk swiftly. I do not for a moment believe that she knew what she was talking about. The rolling increased. She buckled down to the task of making conversation. By the heave of the labouring bust, the restless working of the fingers on the tablecloth, and the uncontrollable eyes that turned always to the companion stairhead, I was able to judge the extremity of her fear. Yet her words were frivolous and commonplace enough; they poured forth unceasingly, punctuated with little laughs and giggles, as a woman's speech should be. Presently, a member of her group suggested going to bed. No, she wanted to sit up; she wanted to go on talking, and as long as she could get a soul to sit with her she had her desire. When for sheer lack of company she was forced to get to her cabin, she left reluctantly, looking back to the well-lighted saloon over her shoulder. The contrast between the flowing triviality of her speech and the strained intentness of eye and hand was a quaint thing to behold. I know now how Fear should be painted.

No one slept very heavily that night. Both arms were needed to grip the berth, while the trunks below wound the carpet-slips into knots and battered the fram-

ing of the cabins. Once it seemed to me that the whole of the labouring fabric that cased our trumpery fortunes stood on end and in this undignified posture hopped a mighty hop. Twice I know I shot out of my berth to join the adventurous trunks on the floor. A hundred times the crash of the wave on the ship's side was followed by the roar of the water, as it swept the decks and raved round the deckhouses. In a lull I heard the flying feet of a man, a shout, and a far-away chorus of lost spirits singing somebody's requiem.

May 24 (Queen's Birthday). — If ever you meet an American, be good to him. This day the ship was dressed with flags from stem to stern, and chiefest of the bunting was the Union-Jack. They had given no word of warning to the English, who were proportionately pleased. At dinner up rose an ex-Commissioner of the Lucknow Division (on my honour, Anglo-India extends to the ends of the earth!) and gave us the health of Her Majesty and the President. It was afterwards that the trouble began. A small American penned half a dozen English into a corner and lectured them soundly on — their want of patriotism!

"What sort of Queen's Birthday do you call this?" he thundered. "What did you drink our President's health for? What's the President to you on this day of all others? Well, suppose you *are* in the minority, all the more reason for standing by your country. Don't talk to me. You Britishers made a mess of it — a mighty bungle of the whole thing. I'm an American of the Americans; but if no one can propose Her Majesty's health better than by just throwing it at your heads, I'm going to try."

Then and there he delivered a remarkably neat little oration — pat, well put together, and clearly delivered. So it came to pass that the Queen's health was best honoured by an American. We English were dazed. I wondered how many Englishmen not trained to addressing their fellows would have spoken half so fluently as the gentleman from 'Frisco.

"Well, you see," said one of us feebly, "she's our Queen, anyhow, and — and — she's been ours for fifty years, and not one of us here has seen England for seven years, and we can't enthuse over the matter. We've lived to be hauled over the coals for want of patriotism by an American! We'll be more careful next time."

And the conversation drifted naturally into the question of the government of men — English, Japanese (we have several travelled Japanese aboard), and Americans throwing the ball from one to another. We bore in mind the golden rule: "Never agree with a man who abuses his own country," and got on well enough.

"Japan," said a little gentleman who was a rich man there, "Japan is divided into two administrative sides. On the one the remains of a very strict and quite Oriental despotism; on the other a mass of — what do you call it? — red-tapeism which is not understood even by the officials who handle it. We copy the red tape, and when it is copied we believe that we administer. That is a vice of all Oriental nations. We are Orientals."

"Oh no, say the most westerly of the westerns," purred an American, soothingly.

The little man was pleased. "Thanks. That is what we hope to believe, but up to the present it is not so.

Look now. A farmer in my country holds a hillside cut into little terraces. Every year he must submit to his Government a statement of the size and revenue paid, not on the whole hillside, but on each terrace. The complete statement makes a pile three inches high, and is of no use when it is made except to keep in work thousands of officials to check the returns. Is that administration? By God! we call it so, but we multiply officials by the twenty, and *they* are not administration. What country is such a fool? Look at our Government offices eaten up with clerks! Some day, I tell you, there will be a smash."

This was new to me, but I might have guessed it. In every country where swords and uniforms accompany civil office there is a natural tendency towards an ill-considered increase of officialdom.

"You might pay India a visit some day," I said. "I fancy that you would find that our country shares your trouble."

Thereupon a Japanese gentleman in the Educational Department began to cross-question me on the matters of his craft in India, and in a quarter of an hour got from me the very little that I knew about primary schools, higher education, and the value of an M. A. degree. He knew exactly what he wanted to ask, and only dropped me when the tooth of desire had clean picked the bone of ignorance.

Then an American held forth, harping on a string that has already been too often twanged in my ear. "What will it be in America itself?"

"The whole system is rotten from top to bottom," he said. "As rotten as rotten can be."

"That's so," said the Louisiana man, with an affirmative puff of smoke.

"They call us a Republic. We may be. I don't think it. You Britishers have got the only republic worth the name. You choose to run your ship of state with a gilt figurehead; but I know, and so does every man who has thought about it, that your Queen doesn't cost you one-half what our system of pure democracy costs us. Politics in America? There aren't any. The whole question of the day is spoils. That's all. We fight our souls out over tram-contracts, gas-contracts, road-contracts, and any darned thing that will turn a dishonest dollar, and we call that politics. No one but a low-down man will run for Congress and the Senate — the Senate of the freest people on earth are bound slaves to some blessed monopoly. If I had money enough, I could buy the Senate of the United States, the Eagle, and the Star-Spangled Banner complete."

"And the Irish vote included?" said some one — a Britisher, I fancy.

"Certainly, if I chose to go yahooing down the street at the tail of the British lion. Anything dirty will buy the Irish vote. That's why our politics are dirty. Some day you Britishers will grant Home Rule to the vermin in our blankets. Then the real Americans will invite the Irish to get up and git to where they came from. 'Wish you'd hurry up that time before we have another trouble. We're bound hand and foot by the Irish vote; or at least that's the excuse for any unusual theft that we perpetrate. I tell you there's no good in an Irishman except as a fighter. He doesn't understand work. He has a natural gift of the gab, and he can drink a man

blind. These three qualifications make him a first-class politician."

With one accord the Americans present commenced to abuse Ireland and its people as they had met them, and each man prefaced his commination service with: "I am an American by birth — an American from way back."

It must be an awful thing to live in a country where you have to explain that you really belong there. Louder grew the clamour and crisper the sentiments.

"If we weren't among Americans, I should say we were consorting with Russians," said a fellow-countryman in my ear.

"They can't mean what they say," I whispered. "Listen to this fellow."

"And I know, for I have been three times round the world and resided in most countries on the Continent, that there was never people yet could govern themselves."

"Allah! This from an American!"

"And who should know better than an American?" was the retort. "For the ignorant — that is to say for the majority — there is only one argument — fear; the fear of Death. In our case we give any scallawag who comes across the water all the same privileges that we have made for ourselves. There we make a mistake. They thank us by playing the fool. Then we shoot them down. You can't persuade the mob of any country to become decent citizens. If they misbehave themselves, shoot them. I saw the bombs thrown at Chicago when our police were blown to bits. I saw the banners in the procession that threw the bombs. All the mottoes on

them were in German. The men were aliens in our midst, and they were shot down like dogs. I've been in labour riots and seen the militia go through a crowd like a finger through tissue paper."

"I was in the riots at New Orleans," said the man from Louisiana. "We turned the Gatling on the other crowd, and they were sick."

"Whew! I wonder what would have happened if a Gatling had been used when the West End riots were in full swing?" said an Englishman. "If a single rioter were killed in an English town by the police, the chances are that the policeman would have to stand his trial for murder and the Ministry of the day would go out."

"Then you've got all your troubles before you. The more power you give the people, the more trouble they will give. With us our better classes are corrupt and our lower classes are lawless. There are millions of useful, law-abiding citizens, and they are very sick of this thing. We execute our justice in the streets. The law courts are no use. Take the case of the Chicago Anarchists. It was all we could do to get 'em hanged; whereas the dead in the streets had been punished offhand. We were sure of *them*. Guess that's the reason we are so quick to fire on a mob. But it's unfair, all the same. We receive all these cattle — Anarchists, Socialists, and ruffians of every sort — and then we shoot them. The States are as republican as they make 'em. We have no use for a man who wants to try any more experiments on the Constitution. We are the biggest people on God's earth. All the world knows that. We've been shouting that we are also the greatest people. No one cares to contradict us but ourselves; and we are now

wondering whether we are what we claim to be. Never mind; you Britishers will have the same experiences to go through. You're beginning to rot now. Your County Councils will make you more rotten because you are putting power into the hands of untrained people. When you reach our level, — every man with a vote and the right to sell it; the right to nominate fellows of his own kidney to swamp out better men, — you'll be what we are now — rotten, rotten, rotten!"

The voice ceased, and no man rose up to contradict.

"We'll worry through it somehow," said the man from Louisiana. "What would do us a world of good now would be a big European war. We're getting slack and sprawly. Now a war outside our borders would make us all pull together. But that's a luxury we shan't get."

"Can't you raise one within your own borders?" I said flippantly, to get rid of the thought of the great blind nation in her unrest putting out her hand to the Sword. Mine was a most unfortunate remark.

"I hope not," said an American, very seriously. "We have paid a good deal to keep ourselves together before this, and it is not likely that we shall split up without protest. Yet some say we are too large, and some say that Washington and the Eastern States are running the whole country. If ever we do divide, — God help us when we do, — it will be East and West this time."

"We built the old hooker too long in the run. Put the engine room aft. Break her back," said an American who had not yet spoken. "'Wonder if our forbears knew how she was going to grow."

"A very large country." The speaker sighed as though the weight of it from New York to 'Frisco lay

upon his shoulders. "If ever we do divide, it means that we are done for. There is no room for four first-class empires in the States. One split will lead to another if the first is successful. What's the use of talking?"

What was the use? Here's our conversation as it ran, the night of the Queen's Birthday. What do *you* think?

No. XXIII

HOW I GOT TO SAN FRANCISCO AND TOOK TEA WITH THE NATIVES THERE.

"Serene, indifferent to fate,
Thou sittest at the western gate,
Thou seest the white seas fold their tents,
Oh warder of two Continents.
Thou drawest all things small and great
To thee beside the Western Gate."

This is what Bret Harte has written of the great city of San Francisco, and for the past fortnight I have been wondering what made him do it. There is neither serenity nor indifference to be found in these parts; and evil would it be for the Continent whose wardship were intrusted to so reckless a guardian. Behold me pitched neck-and-crop from twenty days of the High Seas, into the whirl of California, deprived of any guidance, and left to draw my own conclusions. Protect me from the wrath of an outraged community if these letters be ever read by American eyes. San Francisco is a mad city — inhabited for the most part by perfectly insane people whose women are of a remarkable beauty. When the *City of Peking* steamed through the Golden Gate I saw with great joy that the block-house which guarded the mouth of the "finest harbour in the the world, Sir," could be silenced by two gunboats from Hong-Kong with safety, comfort, and despatch.

Then a reporter leaped aboard, and ere I could gasp held me in his toils. He pumped me exhaustively while I was getting ashore, demanding, of all things in the world, news about Indian journalism. It is an awful thing to enter a new land with a new lie on your lips. I spoke the truth to the evil-minded Custom-house man who turned my most sacred raiment on a floor composed of stable-refuse and pine-splinters; but the reporter overwhelmed me not so much by his poignant audacity as his beautiful ignorance. I am sorry now that I did not tell him more lies as I passed into a city of three hundred thousand white men. Think of it! Three hundred thousand white men and women gathered in one spot, walking upon real pavements in front of real plate-glass windowed shops, and talking something that was not very different from English. It was only when I had tangled myself up in a hopeless maze of small wooden houses, dust, street-refuse, and children who play with empty kerosene tins, that I discovered the difference of speech.

"You want to go to the Palace Hotel?" said an affable youth on a dray. "What in hell are you doing here, then? This is about the lowest place in the city. Go six blocks north to corner of Geary and Market; then walk around till you strike corner of Gutter and Sixteenth, and that brings you there."

I do not vouch for the literal accuracy of these directions, quoting but from a disordered memory.

"Amen," I said. "But who am I that I should strike the corners of such as you name? Peradventure they be gentlemen of repute, and might hit back. Bring it down to dots, my son."

I thought he would have smitten me, but he didn't.

He explained that no one ever used the word "street," and that every one was supposed to know how the streets run; for sometimes the names were upon the lamps and sometimes they weren't. Fortified with these directions I proceeded till I found a mighty street full of sumptuous buildings four or five stories high, but paved with rude cobble stones in the fashion of the Year One. A cable-car without any visible means of support slid stealthily behind me and nearly struck me in the back. A hundred yards further there was a slight commotion in the street — a gathering together of three or four — and something that glittered as it moved very swiftly. A ponderous Irish gentleman with priest's cords in his hat and a small nickel-plated badge on his fat bosom emerged from the knot, supporting a Chinaman who had been stabbed in the eye and was bleeding like a pig. The bystanders went their ways, and the Chinaman, assisted by the policeman, his own. Of course this was none of my business, but I rather wanted to know what had happened to the gentleman who had dealt the stab. It said a great deal for the excellence of the municipal arrangements of the town that a surging crowd did not at once block the street to see what was going forward. I was the sixth man and the last who assisted at the performance, and my curiosity was six times the greatest. Indeed, I felt ashamed of showing it.

There were no more incidents till I reached the Palace Hotel, a seven-storied warren of humanity with a thousand rooms in it. All the travel-books will tell you about hotel arrangements in this country. They should be seen to be appreciated. Understand clearly — and this letter is written after a thousand miles of experi-

ences — that money will not buy you service in the West.

When the hotel clerk — the man who awards your room to you and who is supposed to give you information — when that resplendent individual stoops to attend to your wants, he does so whistling or humming, or picking his teeth, or pauses to converse with some one he knows. These performances, I gather, are to impress upon you that he is a free man and your equal. From his general appearance and the size of his diamonds he ought to be your superior. There is no necessity for this swaggering, self-consciousness of freedom. Business is business, and the man who is paid to attend to a man might reasonably devote his whole attention to the job.

In a vast marble-paved hall under the glare of an electric light sat forty or fifty men; and for their use and amusement were provided spittoons of infinite capacity and generous gape. Most of the men wore frock-coats and top-hats, — the things that we in India put on at a wedding breakfast if we possessed them, — but they all spat. They spat on principle. The spittoons were on the staircases, in each bedroom — yea, and in chambers even more sacred than these. They chased one into retirement, but they blossomed in chiefest splendour round the Bar, and they were all used, every reeking one of 'em. Just before I began to feel deathly sick, another reporter grappled me. What he wanted to know was the precise area of India in square miles. I referred him to Whittaker. He had never heard of Whittaker. He wanted it from my own mouth, and I would not tell him. Then he swerved off, like the other man, to details of journalism in our own country. I ventured

to suggest that the interior economy of a paper most concerned the people who worked it. "That's the very thing that interests us," he said. "Have you got reporters anything like our reporters on Indian news papers?" "We have not," I said, and suppressed the "thank God" rising to my lips. "*Why* haven't you?" said he. "Because they would die," I said. It was exactly like talking to a child — a very rude little child. He would begin almost every sentence with: "Now tell me something about India," and would turn aimlessly from one question to another without the least continuity. I was not angry, but keenly interested. The man was a revelation to me. To his questions I returned answers mendacious and evasive. After all, it really did not matter what I said. He could not understand. I can only hope and pray that none of the readers of the *Pioneer* will ever see that portentous interview. The man made me out to be an idiot several sizes more drivelling than my destiny intended, and the rankness of his ignorance managed to distort the few poor facts with which I supplied him into large and elaborate lies. Then thought I: "The matter of American journalism shall be looked into later on. At present I will enjoy myself."

No man rose to tell me what were the lions of the place. No one volunteered any sort of conveyance. I was absolutely alone in this big city of white folk. By instinct I sought refreshment and came upon a bar-room, full of bad Salon pictures, in which men with hats on the backs of their heads were wolfing food from a counter. It was the institution of the "Free Lunch" that I had struck. You paid for a drink and got as much as you

wanted to eat. For something less than a rupee a day a man can feed himself sumptuously in San Francisco, even though he be bankrupt. Remember this if ever you are stranded in these parts.

Later, I began a vast but unsystematic exploration of the streets. I asked for no names. It was enough that the pavements were full of white men and women, the streets clanging with traffic, and that the restful roar of a great city rang in my ears. The cable-cars glided to all points of the compass. I took them one by one till I could go no farther. San Francisco has been pitched down on the sand-bunkers of the Bikaneer desert. About one-fourth of it is ground reclaimed from the sea — any old-timer will tell you all about that. The remainder is ragged, unthrifty sand-hills, pegged down by houses.

From an English point of view there has not been the least attempt at grading those hills, and indeed you might as well try to grade the hillocks of Sind. The cable-cars have for all practical purposes made San Francisco a dead level. They take no count of rise or fall, but slide equably on their appointed courses from one end to the other of a six-mile street. They turn corners almost at right angles; cross other lines, and, for aught I know, may run up the sides of houses. There is no visible agency of their flight; but once in a while you shall pass a five-storied building, humming with machinery that winds up an everlasting wire-cable, and the initiated will tell you that here is the mechanism. I gave up asking questions. If it pleases Providence to make a car run up and down a slit in the ground for many miles, and if for twopence-halfpenny I can ride in that car, why shall I seek the reasons of the miracle?

Rather let me look out of the windows till the shops give place to thousands and thousands of little houses made of wood — each house just big enough for a man and his family. Let me watch the people in the cars, and try to find out in what manner they differ from us, their ancestors. They delude themselves into the belief that they talk English, — *the* English, — and I have already been pitied for speaking with "an English accent." The man who pitied me spoke, so far as I was concerned, the language of thieves. And they all do. Where we put the accent forward, they throw it back, and *vice versa ;* where we use the long *a*, they use the short; and words so simple as to be past mistaking, they pronounce somewhere up in the dome of their heads. How do these things happen? Oliver Wendell Holmes says that Yankee schoolmarms, the cider, and the salt codfish of the Eastern States are responsible for what he calls a nasal accent. A Hindu is a Hindu, and a brother to the man who knows his vernacular; and a Frenchman is French because he speaks his own language; but the American has no language. He is dialect, slang, provincialism, accent, and so forth. Now that I have heard their voices, all the beauty of Bret Harte is being ruined for me, because I find myself catching through the roll of his rhythmical prose the cadence of his peculiar fatherland. Get an American lady to read to you "How Santa Claus came to Simpson's Bar," and see how much is, under her tongue, left of the beauty of the original.

But I am sorry for Bret Harte. It happened this way. A reporter asked me what I thought of the city, and I made answer suavely that it was hallowed ground to me

because of Bret Harte. That was true. "Well," said the reporter, "Bret Harte claims California, but California don't claim Bret Harte. He's been so long in England that he's quite English. Have you seen our cracker-factories and the new offices of the *Examiner?*" He could not understand that to the outside world the city was worth a great deal less than the man.

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Night fell over the Pacific, and the white sea-fog whipped through the streets, dimming the splendours of the electric lights. It is the use of this city, her men and women, to parade between the hours of eight and ten a certain street, called Kearney Street, where the finest shops are situated. Here the click of heels on the pavement is loudest, here the lights are brightest, and here the thunder of the traffic is most overwhelming. I watched Young California and saw that it was at least expensively dressed, cheerful in manner, and self-asserting in conversation. Also the women are very fair. The maidens were of generous build, large, well-groomed, and attired in raiment that even to my inexperienced eyes must have cost much. Kearney Street, at nine o'clock, levels all distinctions of rank as impartially as the grave. Again and again I loitered at the heels of a couple of resplendent beings, only to overhear, when I expected the level voice of culture, the *staccato* "Sez he," "Sez I," that is the mark of the white servant-girl all the world over.

This was depressing because, in spite of all that goes to the contrary, fine feathers ought to make fine birds. There was wealth — unlimited wealth — in the streets,

but not an accent that would not have been dear at fifty cents. Wherefore, revolving in my mind that these folk were barbarians, I was presently enlightened and made aware that they also were the heirs of all the ages, and civilised after all. There appeared before me an affable stranger of prepossessing appearance, with a blue and an innocent eye. Addressing me by name, he claimed to have met me in New York at the Windsor, and to this claim I gave a qualified assent. I did not remember the fact, but since he was so certain of it, why then — I waited developments. "And what did you think of Indiana when you came through?" was the next question. It revealed the mystery of previous acquaintance, and one or two other things. With reprehensible carelessness, my friend of the light-blue eye had looked up the name of his victim in the hotel register and read "India" for Indiana. He could not imagine an Englishman coming through the States from West to East instead of by the regularly ordained route. My fear was that in his delight at finding me so responsive he would make remarks about New York and the Windsor which I could not understand. And indeed, he adventured in this direction once or twice, asking me what I thought of such and such streets, which, from his tone, I gathered were anything but respectable. It is trying to talk unknown New York in almost unknown San Francisco. But my friend was merciful. He protested that I was one after his own heart, and pressed upon me rare and curious drinks at more than one bar. These drinks I accepted with gratitude, as also the cigars with which his pockets were stored. He would show me the Life of the city. Having no desire

to watch a weary old play again, I evaded the offer, and received in lieu of the Devil's instruction much coarse flattery. Curiously constituted is the soul of man. Knowing how and where this man lied; waiting idly for the finale; I was distinctly conscious, as he bubbled compliments in my ear, of soft thrills of gratified pride. I was wise, quoth he, anybody could see that with half an eye; sagacious; versed in the affairs of the world; an acquaintance to be desired; one who had tasted the cup of Life with discretion. All this pleased me, and in a measure numbed the suspicion that was thoroughly aroused. Eventually the blue-eyed one discovered, nay insisted, that I had a taste for cards (this was clumsily worked in, but it was my fault, in that I met him half-way, and allowed him no chance of good acting). Hereupon, I laid my head to one side, and simulated unholy wisdom, quoting odds and ends of poker-talk, all ludicrously misapplied. My friend kept his countenance admirably; and well he might, for five minutes later we arrived, always by the purest of chances, at a place where we could play cards, and also frivol with Louisiana State Lottery tickets. Would I play? "Nay," said I, "for to me cards have neither meaning nor continuity; but let us assume that I am going to play. How would you and your friends get to work? Would you play a straight game, or make me drunk, or — well, the fact is I'm a newspaper man, and I'd be much obliged if you'd let me know something about bunco-steering." My blue-eyed friend cursed me by his gods, — the Right and the Left Bower; he even cursed the very good cigars he had given me. But, the storm over, he quieted down and explained. I

apologised for causing him to waste an evening, and we spent a very pleasant time together. Inaccuracy, provincialism, and a too hasty rushing to conclusions were the rocks that he had split on; but he got his revenge when he said: "How would I play with you? From all the poppycock" (*Anglice*, bosh) "you talked about poker, I'd ha' played a straight game and skinned you. I wouldn't have taken the trouble to make you drunk. You never knew anything of the game; but the way I was mistaken in you makes me sick." He glared at me as though I had done him an injury. To-day I know how it is that, year after year, week after week, the bunco-steerer, who is the confidence-trick and the card-sharper man of other climes, secures his prey. He slavers them over with flattery, as the snake slavers the rabbit. The incident depressed me because it showed I had left the innocent East far behind, and was come to a country where a man must look out for himself. The very hotel bristled with notices about keeping my door locked, and depositing my valuables in a safe. The white man in a lump is bad. Weeping softly for O-Toyo (little I knew then that my heart was to be torn afresh from my bosom !), I fell asleep in the clanging hotel.

Next morning I had entered upon the Deferred Inheritance. There are no princes in America, — at least with crowns on their heads, — but a generous-minded member of some royal family received my letter of introduction. Ere the day closed I was a member of the two clubs and booked for many engagements to dinner and party. Now this prince, upon whose financial operations be continual increase, had no reason, nor had the others, his friends, to put himself out for the sake of one

Briton more or less; but he rested not till he had accomplished all in my behalf that a mother could think of for her *débutante* daughter. Do you know the Bohemian Club of San Francisco? They say its fame extends over the world. It was created somewhat on the lines of the Savage by men who wrote or drew things, and it has blossomed into most unrepublican luxury. The ruler of the place is an owl — an owl standing upon a skull and cross-bones, showing forth grimly the wisdom of the man of letters and the end of his hopes for immortality. The owl stands on the staircase, a statue four feet high, is carved in the woodwork, flutters on the frescoed ceilings, is stamped on the note paper, and hangs on the walls. He is an Ancient and Honourable Bird. Under his wing 'twas my privilege to meet with white men whose lives were not chained down to routine of toil, who wrote magazine articles instead of reading them hurriedly in the pauses of office-work, who painted pictures instead of contenting themselves with cheap etchings picked up at another man's sale of effects. Mine were all the rights of social intercourse that India, stony-hearted step-mother of Collectors, has swindled us out of. Treading soft carpets and breathing the incense of superior cigars, I wandered from room to room studying the paintings in which the members of the club had caricatured themselves, their associates, and their aims. There was a slick French audacity about the workmanship of these men of toil unbending that went straight to the heart of the beholder. And yet it was not altogether French. A dry grimness of treatment, almost Dutch, marked the difference. The men painted as they spoke — with certainty. The club in-

dulges in revelries which it calls "jinks" — high and low, — at intervals, — and each of these gatherings is faithfully portrayed in oils by hands that know their business. In this club were no amateurs spoiling canvas because they fancied they could handle oils without knowledge of shadows or anatomy — no gentleman of leisure ruining the temper of publishers and an already ruined market with atttempts to write "because everybody writes something these days." My hosts were working, or had worked, for their daily bread with pen or paint, and their talk for the most part was of the shop shoppy — that is to say, delightful. They extended a large hand of welcome and were as brethren, and I did homage to the Owl and listened to their talk. An Indian Club about Christmas-time will yield, if properly worked, an abundant harvest of queer tales; but at a gathering of Americans from the uttermost ends of their own continent the tales are larger, thicker, more spinous, and even more azure than any Indian variety. Tales of the War I heard told by an ex-officer of the South over his evening drink to a Colonel of the Northern army; my introducer, who had served as a trooper in the Northern Horse, throwing in emendations from time to time.

Other voices followed with equally wondrous tales of riata-throwing in Mexico or Arizona, of gambling at army posts in Texas, of newspaper wars waged in godless Chicago, of deaths sudden and violent in Montana and Dakota, of the loves of half-breed maidens in the South, and fantastic huntings for gold in mysterious Alaska. Above all, they told the story of the building of old San Francisco, when the "finest collection of humanity on God's earth, Sir, started this town, and the water

came up to the foot of Market Street." Very terrible were some of the tales, grimly humorous the others, and the men in broadcloth and fine linen who told them had played their parts in them.

"And now and again when things got too bad they would toll the city bell, and the Vigilance Committee turned out and hanged the suspicious characters. A man didn't begin to be suspected in those days till he had committed at least one unprovoked murder," said a calm-eyed, portly old gentleman. I looked at the pictures around me, the noiseless, neat-uniformed waiter behind me, the oak-ribbed ceiling above, the velvety carpet beneath. It was hard to realise that even twenty years ago you could see a man hanged with great pomp. Later on I found reason to change my opinion. The tales gave me a headache and set me thinking. How in the world was it possible to take in even one-thousandth of this huge, roaring, many-sided continent? In the silence of the sumptuous library lay Professor Bryce's book on the American Republic. "It is an omen," said I. "He has done all things in all seriousness, and he may be purchased for half a guinea. Those who desire information of the most undoubted must refer to his pages. For me is the daily round of vagabondage, the recording of the incidents of the hour, and talk with the travelling companion of the day. I will not 'do' this country at all."

And I forgot all about India for ten days while I went out to dinners and watched the social customs of the people, which are entirely different from our customs, and was introduced to the men of many millions. These persons are harmless in their earlier stages; that is to

say, a man worth three or four million dollars may be a good talker, clever, amusing, and of the world; a man with twice that amount is to be avoided; and a twenty-million man is —just twenty millions. Take an instance. I was speaking to a newspaper man about seeing the proprietor of his journal. My friend snorted indignantly: "See *him!* Great Scott! *No!* If he happens to appear in the office, I have to associate with him; but, thank Heaven, outside of that I move in circles where he cannot come."

And yet the first thing I have been taught to believe is that money was everything in America!

No. XXIV

SHOWS HOW THROUGH FOLLY I ASSISTED AT A MURDER AND WAS AFRAID. THE RULE OF THE DEMOCRACY AND THE DESPOTISM OF THE ALIEN.

"Poor men — God made, and all for that!"

It was a bad business throughout, and the only consolation is that it was all my fault. A man took me round the Chinese quarter of San Francisco, which is a ward of the city of Canton set down in the most eligible business-quarter of the place. The Chinaman with his usual skill has possessed himself of good brick fire-proof buildings and, following instinct, has packed each tenement with hundreds of souls, all living in filth and squalor not to be appreciated save by you in India. That cursory investigation ought to have sufficed; but I wanted to know how deep in the earth the Pig-tail had taken root. Therefore I explored the Chinese quarter a second time and alone, which was foolishness. No one in the filthy streets (but for the blessed sea breezes San Francisco would enjoy cholera every season) interfered with my movements, though many asked for *cumshaw*. I struck a house about four stories high full of celestial abominations, and began to burrow down; having heard that these tenements were constructed on the lines of icebergs — two-thirds below sight level. Downstairs I

crawled past Chinamen in bunks, opium-smokers, brothels, and gambling hells, till I had reached the second cellar — was in fact, in the labyrinths of a warren. Great is the wisdom of the Chinaman. In time of trouble that house could be razed to the ground by the mob, and yet hide all its inhabitants in brick-walled and wooden-beamed subterranean galleries, strengthened with iron-framed doors and gates. On the second underground floor a man asked for *cumshaw* and took me downstairs to yet another cellar, where the air was as thick as butter, and the lamps burned little holes in it not more than an inch square. In this place a poker club had assembled and was in full swing. The Chinaman loves "pokel," and plays it with great skill, swearing like a cat when he loses. Most of the men round the table were in semi-European dress, their pig-tails curled up under billy-cock hats. One of the company looked like a Eurasian, whence I argued that he was a Mexican — a supposition that later inquiries confirmed. They were a picturesque set of fiends and polite, being too absorbed in their game to look at the stranger. We were all deep down under the earth, and save for the rustle of a blue gown sleeve and the ghostly whisper of the cards as they were shuffled and played, there was no sound. The heat was almost unendurable. There was some dispute between the Mexican and the man on his left. The latter shifted his place to put the table between himself and his opponent, and stretched a lean yellow hand towards the Mexican's winnings.

Mark how purely man is a creature of instinct. Rarely introduced to the pistol, I saw the Mexican half rise in his chair and at the same instant found myself full

length on the floor. None had told me that this was the best attitude when bullets are abroad. I was there prone before I had time to think — dropping as the room was filled with an intolerable clamour like the discharge of a cannon. In those close quarters the pistol report had no room to spread any more than the smoke — then acrid in my nostrils. There was no second shot, but a great silence in which I rose slowly to my knees. The Chinaman was gripping the table with both hands and staring in front of him at an empty chair. The Mexican had gone, and a little whirl of smoke was floating near the roof. Still gripping the table, the Chinaman said: "Ah!" in the tone that a man would use when, looking up from his work suddenly, he sees a well-known friend in the doorway. Then he coughed and fell over to his own right, and I saw that he had been shot in the stomach.

I became aware that, save for two men leaning over the stricken one, the room was empty; and all the tides of intense fear, hitherto held back by intenser curiosity, swept over my soul. I ardently desired the outside air. It was possible that the Chinamen would mistake me for the Mexican, — everything horrible seemed possible just then, — and it was more than possible that the stairways would be closed while they were hunting for the murderer. The man on the floor coughed a sickening cough. I heard it as I fled, and one of his companions turned out the lamp. Those stairs seemed interminable, and to add to my dismay there was no sound of commotion in the house. No one hindered, no one even looked at me. There was no trace of the Mexican. I found the doorway and, my legs trembling under me, reached the protection of the clear cool night, the fog, and the rain. I dared

not run, and for the life of me I could not walk. I must have effected a compromise, for I remember the light of a street lamp showed the shadow of one half skipping — caracoling along the pavements in what seemed to be an ecstacy of suppressed happiness. But it was fear — deadly fear. Fear compounded of past knowledge of the Oriental — only other white man — available witness — three stories underground — and the cough of the Chinaman now some forty feet under my clattering boot-heels. It was good to see the shop-fronts and electric lights again. Not for anything would I have informed the police, because I firmly believed that the Mexican had been dealt with somewhere down there on the third floor long ere I had reached the air; and, moreover, once clear of the place, I could not for the life of me tell where it was. My ill-considered flight brought me out somewhere a mile distant from the hotel; and the clank of the lift that bore me to a bed six stories above ground was music in my ears. Wherefore I would impress it upon you who follow after, do not knock about the Chinese quarters at night and alone. You may stumble across a picturesque piece of human nature that will unsteady your nerves for half a day.

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And this brings me by natural sequence to the great drink question. As you know, of course, the American does not drink at meals as a sensible man should. Indeed, he has no meals. He stuffs for ten minutes thrice a day. Also he has no decent notions about the sun being over the yard-arm or below the horizon. He pours his vanity into himself at unholy hours, and indeed he

can hardly help it. You have no notion of what "treating" means on the Western slope. It is more than an institution; it is a religion, though men tell me that it is nothing to what it was. Take a very common instance. At 10.30 A.M. a man is smitten with desire for stimulants. He is in the company of two friends. All three adjourn to the nearest bar, — seldom more than twenty yards away, — and take three straight whiskys. They talk for two minutes. The second and third man then treats in order; and thus each walks into the street, two of them the poorer by three goes of whisky under their belt and one with two more liquors than he wanted. It is not etiquette yet to refuse a treat. The result is peculiar. I have never yet, I confess, seen a drunken man in the streets, but I have heard more about drunkenness among white men, and seen more decent men above or below themselves with drink, than I care to think about. And the vice runs up into all sorts of circles and societies. Never was I more astonished than at one pleasant dinner party to hear a pair of pretty lips say casually of a gentleman friend then under discussion, "He was drunk." The fact was merely stated without emotion. That was what startled me. But the climate of California deals kindly with excess, and treacherously covers up its traces. A man neither bloats nor shrivels in this dry air. He continues with the false bloom of health upon his cheeks, an equable eye, a firm mouth, and a steady hand till a day of reckoning arrives, and suddenly breaking up, about the head, he dies, and his friends speak his epitaph accordingly. Why people who in most cases cannot hold their liquor should play with it so recklessly I leave to others to decide. This unhappy

state of affairs has, however, produced one good result which I will confide to you. In the heart of the business quarter, where banks and bankers are thickest, and telegraph wires most numerous, stands a semi-subterranean bar tended by a German with long blond locks and a crystalline eye. Go thither softly, treading on the tips of your toes, and ask him for a Button Punch. 'Twill take ten minutes to brew, but the result is the highest and noblest product of the age. No man but one knows what is in it. I have a theory it is compounded of the shavings of cherubs' wings, the glory of a tropical dawn, the red clouds of sunset, and fragments of lost epics by dead masters. But try you for yourselves, and pause a while to bless me, who am always mindful of the truest interests of my brethren.

But enough of the stale spilth of bar-rooms. Turn now to the august spectacle of a Government of the people, by the people, for the people, as it is understood in the city of San Francisco. Professor Bryce's book will tell you that every American citizen over twenty-one years of age possesses a vote. He may not know how to run his own business, control his wife, or instil reverence into his children, may be pauper, half-crazed with drink, bankrupt, dissolute, or merely a born fool; but he has a vote. If he likes, he can be voting most of his time — voting for his State Governor, his municipal officers, local option, sewage contracts, or anything else of which he has no special knowledge.

Once every four years he votes for a new President. In his spare moments he votes for his own judges — the men who shall give him justice. These are dependent on popular favour for re-election inasmuch as they are but

chosen for a term of years — two or three, I believe. Such a position is manifestly best calculated to create an independent and unprejudiced administrator. Now this mass of persons who vote is divided into two parties — Republican and Democrat. They are both agreed in thinking that the other part is running creation (which is America) into red flame. Also the Democrat as a party drinks more than the Republican, and when drunk may be heard to talk about a thing called the Tariff, which he does not understand, but which he conceives to be the bulwark of the country or else the surest power for its destruction. Sometimes he says one thing and sometimes another, in order to contradict the Republican, who is always contradicting himself. And this is a true and lucid account of the forepart of American politics. The behind-part is otherwise.

Since every man has a vote and may vote on every conceivable thing, it follows that there exist certain wise men who understand the art of buying up votes retail, and vending them wholesale to whoever wants them most urgently. Now an American engaged in making a home for himself has not time to vote for turn-cocks and district attorneys and cattle of that kind, but the unemployed have much time because they are always on hand somewhere in the streets. They are called "the boys," and form a peculiar class. The boys are young men; inexpert in war, unskilled in labour; who have neither killed a man, lifted cattle, or dug a well. In plain English, they are just the men in the streets who can always be trusted to rally round any cause that has a glass of liquor for a visible heart. They wait — they are on hand —; and in being on hand lies the crown

and the glory of American politics. The wise man is he who, keeping a liquor-saloon and judiciously dispensing drinks, knows how to retain within arm's reach a block of men who will vote for or against anything under the canopy of Heaven. Not every saloon-keeper can do this. It demands careful study of city politics, tact, the power of conciliation, and infinite resources of anecdote to amuse and keep the crowd together night after night, till the saloon becomes a salon. Above all, the liquor side of the scheme must not be worked for immediate profit. The boys who drink so freely will ultimately pay their host a thousandfold. An Irishman, and an Irishman pre-eminently, knows how to work such a saloon parliament. Observe for a moment the plan of operations. The rank and file are treated to drink and a little money — and they vote. He who controls ten votes receives a proportionate reward; the dispenser of a thousand votes is worthy of reverence, and so the chain runs on till we reach the most successful worker of public saloons — the man most skilful in keeping his items together and using them when required. Such a man governs the city as absolutely as a king. And you would know where the gain comes in? The whole of the public offices of a city (with the exception of a very few where special technical skill is required) are short-term offices distributed according to "political" leanings. What would you have? A big city requires many officials. Each office carries a salary and influence worth twice the pay. The offices are for the representatives of the men who keep together and are on hand to vote. The Commissioner of Sewage, let us say, is a gentleman who has been elected to his office by a Republican vote. He

knows little and cares less about sewage, but he has sense enough to man the pumping-works and the street-sweeping-machines with the gentlemen who elected him. The Commissioner of Police has been helped to his post very largely by the influence of the boys at such and such a saloon. He may be the guardian of city morals, but he is not going to allow his subordinates to enforce early closing or abstention from gambling in that saloon. Most offices are limited to four years, consequently he is a fool who does not make his office pay him while he is in it.

The only people who suffer by this happy arrangement are, in fact, the people who devised the lovely system. And they suffer because they are Americans. Let us explain. As you know, every big city here holds at least one big foreign vote — generally Irish, frequently German. In San Francisco, the gathering place of the races, there is a distinct Italian vote to be considered, but the Irish vote is more important. For this reason the Irishman does not kill himself with overwork. He is made for the cheery dispensing of liquors, for everlasting blarney, and possesses a wonderfully keen appreciation of the weaknesses of lesser human nature. Also he has no sort of conscience, and only one strong conviction — that of deep-rooted hatred toward England. He keeps to the streets, he is on hand, he votes joyously, spending days lavishly, — and time is the American's dearest commodity. Behold the glorious result. To-day the city of San Francisco is governed by the Irish vote and the Irish influence, under the rule of a gentleman whose sight is impaired, and who requires a man to lead him about the streets.

He is called officially "Boss Buckley," and unofficially the "Blind White Devil." I have before me now the record of his amiable career in black and white. It occupies four columns of small print, and perhaps you would think it disgraceful. Summarised, it is as follows: Boss Buckley, by tact and deep knowledge of the seamy side of the city, won himself a following of voters. He sought no office himself, or rarely: but as his following increased he sold their services to the highest bidder, himself taking toll of the revenues of every office. He controlled the Democratic party in the city of San Francisco. The people appoint their own judges. Boss Buckley's people appointed judges. These judges naturally were Boss Buckley's property. I have been to dinner parties and heard educated men, not concerned with politics, telling stories one to another of "justice," both civil and criminal, being bought with a price from the hands of these judges. Such tales they told without heat, as men recording facts. Contracts for road-mending, public buildings, and the like are under the control of Boss Buckley, because the men whom Buckley's following sent to the City Council adjudicate on these contracts; and on each and every one of these contracts Boss Buckley levies his percentage for himself and his allies.

The Republican party in San Francisco also have their boss. He is not so great a genius as Boss Buckley, but I decline to believe that he is any whit more virtuous. He has a smaller number of votes at his command.

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SAN FRANCISCO